

# The Bishop Misbehaves

*A COMEDY IN THREE ACTS*

BY

FREDERICK JACKSON

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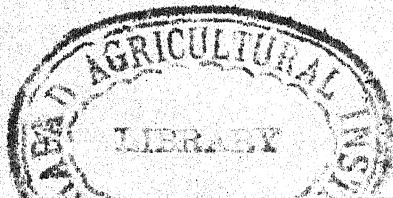
SAMUEL FRENCH, INC.

25 WEST 45TH STREET, NEW YORK, N. Y.

811 WEST 7TH STREET, LOS ANGELES, CALIF.

SAMUEL FRENCH, LTD., LONDON

SAMUEL FRENCH (CANADA), LTD., TORONTO



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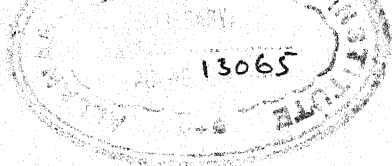
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## THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES

### STORY OF THE PLAY

The Bishop, an elderly and quite saintly dignitary, stops by accident with his equally mild old sister in an ugly "pub" taproom just after there has been a serious hold-up and robbery. The Bishop has always had a secret love of the wickednesses on display in detective stories, and here is his holiday. He gobbles up clues like an old black rooster among beetles. More than that, he snatches the swag. He leaves the evil place with the stolen jewels in his own pocket. He knows the highwaymen will follow him to the Bishop's Palace. He hides the swag in the nearest humidior and awaits his fate. The fate consists of several ruffians, a masked hero and a suitably attractive heroine. Sometimes these enemies have the Bishop at bay, sometimes he has them. It is a game of turning the tables, turning out the lights, pistol-pointing, knife-brandishing, out-guessing and out-confessing, until the hero and heroine have won the Bishop's Amen and the rumpus is finally over. Not that you don't regret that it's over.

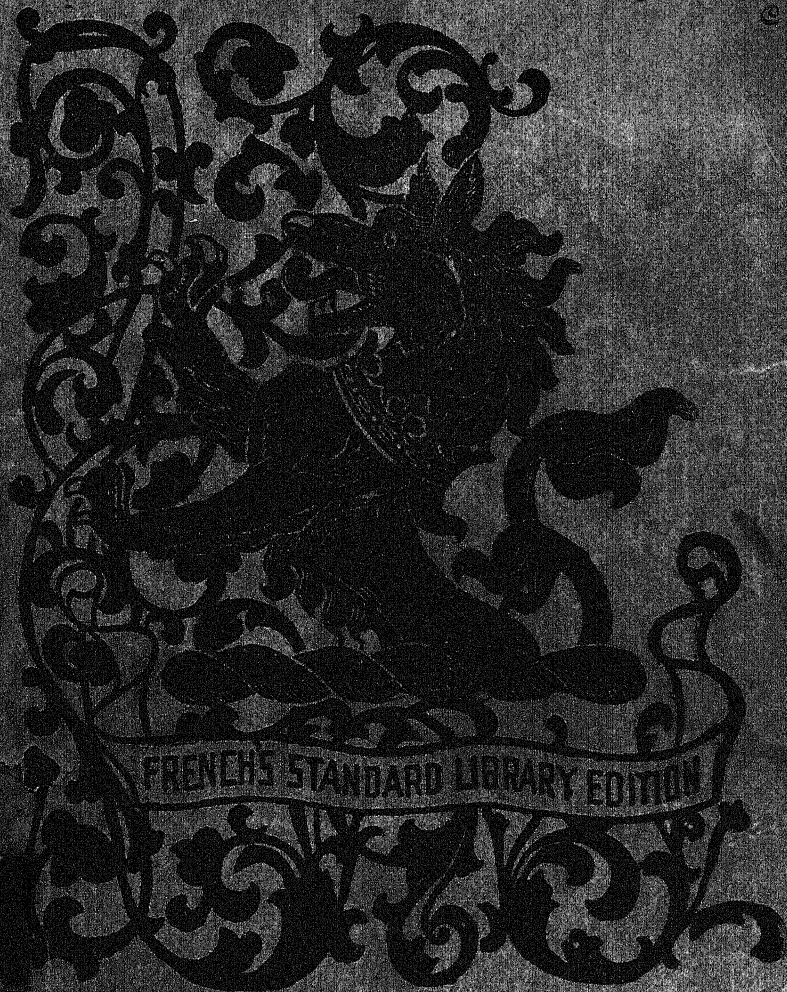
# The Bishop Misbehaves

By FREDERICK JACKSON

THE DIMMALITES

Washington, Conn. 51

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SAMUEL FRENCH, 25 West 45th St., New York

Program of the first performance of "THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES," as produced at the Cort Theatre, New York:

JOHN GOLDEN

*Presents*

WALTER CONNOLLY

*In*

THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES

*By*

FREDERICK JACKSON

*With*

JANE WYATT

Staged by Ira Hards

Settings designed by Woodman Thompson

### CAST

RED EAGAN .....	<i>A. P. Kaye</i>
DONALD MEADOWS.....	<i>Alan Marshal</i>
HESTER GRANTHAM .....	<i>Jane Wyatt</i>
GUY WALLER .....	<i>Reynolds Denniston</i>
MRS. WALLER .....	<i>Phyllis Joyce</i>
THE BISHOP OF BROADMINSTER.....	<i>Walter Connolly</i>
LADY EMILY LYONS .....	<i>Lucy Beaumont</i>
COLLINS .....	<i>James Jolley</i>
FRENCHY .....	<i>Charles Laite</i>
MR. BROOKE .....	<i>Horace Sinclair</i>

### SCENES

ACT I. *Taproom of The Queen's Head, at Tadworth, in Surrey.*

ACTS II AND III. *Hall of the Bishop's Palace at Broadminster.*

*The action of the play covers exactly the time it takes to play it.*

## DESCRIPTION OF CHARACTERS

BISHOP OF BROADMINSTER: *A stout, kindly, cherubic man of 50. Humorous and shrewd.*

RED EAGAN, *who is somewhat of the pugilist type, is in his shirt sleeves. He wears a bar-apron.*

DONALD MEADOWS *is a good-looking young man.*

HESTER *is pretty—rather saucy and impudent, but capable-looking.*

MRS. WALLER *is overblown, pretty in a common way, overdressed and wearing too much jewelry.*

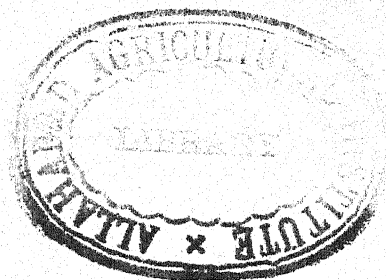
WALLER *is bluff, gross, pompous and bad-tempered. An obnoxious type of self-made man.*

LADY EMILY LYONS: *She is a very old lady, quiet and demure.*

COLLINS: *He is wearing a regulation chauffeur's uniform.*

MR. BROOKE *is a wizened little man, bald-headed and spectacled.*

FRENCHY: *A good-looking man of 30.*



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# The Bishop Misbehaves

## ACT ONE

SCENE: Taproom of "The Queen's Head" at Tadworth. A typical country "pub" somewhat off the beaten path. At the Left, running up and down stage, is a bar about six feet long. Shelves back of the bar contain the usual assortment of bottles, glasses, etc. Beneath the bar is a shelf on which are: a telephone (upstage end), two lemons, a butcher knife. Knife sharpener, bottle opener, three whiskey glasses and three highball glasses. In the Left wall at the upstage end of the bar is a small door L. leading to a back room. Over this door is a row of inset shelves containing bottles. In the back wall Left of Center is the main door leading to the outside. A window is Left of this door. Right of the door is a row of wooden pegs used as coat hangers. In the Right back wall is a fireplace. On the mantel is an old clock, set for nine, several pewter steins and a large wood and pewter mug. This large mug is on the Left end of the mantel and is the one used to hide the jewels in. Above the mantel is a portrait of Queen Victoria. A coal fire burns in the grate and a poker leans against the fireplace. Upstage in the Right wall is a door R. leading to a back room. Down Right against the wall is a

small horsehair sofa. A square table is in front of this sofa and single chairs are above and to the Left of it. A single chair is up Left of the fireplace. Left of Center is another square table with chairs above and to the Left of it. On this table is an ashtray and a hank of new clothesline. A gas fixture burns above the bar and another above the sofa at Right. Whiskey signs and fight pictures adorn the walls.

TIME: Nine P.M. A rainy night.

DISCOVERED: RED EAGAN, the bartender, is seated Left of the table Left Center. RED, who is somewhat the pugilist type, is in his shirt sleeves. He wears a bar apron. He is, at the moment, occupied in cutting three-foot lengths of rope from a hank of clothesline, using a large jack-knife. He is whistling softly but monotonously. A trick he uses when worried.

AT RISE OF CURTAIN: The CLOCK on the mantel strikes nine. On the third stroke of the clock DONALD MEADOWS enters L.C. DONALD is a good-looking young man in evening dress, wearing a topcoat and soft black hat.

RED. (*As DONALD enters*) What's up? Any sign of 'em?

DONALD. (*Hanging his coat on peg back of the door*) No!

RED. It's nine o'clock. They ought to be 'ere by now.

DONALD. (*Going to the fire*) Yes! It's raining like the devil. The roads are terrible.

RED. (*Rising*) I 'ope to 'eaven nothin's gone wrong. I don't trust the Weasel.

DONALD. (*Exasperated*) I know you don't!



You've said so before. (*He goes down back of the table R. Takes a revolver from his pocket and examines it.*)

RED. (*Irritatedly*) Yes! An' now I says so again—see?

DONALD. (*Putting the revolver in his pocket and going to c.*) Quite!

RED. I never did want 'im in from the first.

DONALD. (*Going to R. of the table L.*) Well, he is in—and I know he'll do. I cracked a crib with him once before and I want him to drive that car.

RED. Well, I only 'opes you don't live to regret choosin' 'im, that's all.

DONALD. (*Imitating RED*) I only 'opes I live—whether I regret choosin' 'im or not. Come, man, what's worrying you? Getting windy?

RED. Well, ain't Waller goin' to suspect that the Weasel's mixed up in this?

DONALD. Why should he?

RED. Well, I bloomin' well should if it was me. (*Sits L. of the table*) If 'e only 'ad guts!—the Weasel I means, see?

DONALD. (*Meaningly*) Yes. I thought you meant the Weasel. (*He picks up three short pieces of rope which RED has cut from the table and puts them in his coat pocket.*)

RED. Frenchy, now—'e knows 'ow to look out for 'imself and if 'e gets in a tight corner 'e can 'andle a knife somethin' pretty.

DONALD. (*Quickly*) How do you know?

RED. Well, 'e was down 'ere the other night an' we 'ad a talk. (*He breaks off suddenly, listening. Rises and goes quickly to door up L.C. and looks out. Closes the door and comes down R. of DONALD*) No—that ain't a car.

DONALD. (*Goes to the chair above table L.*) So Frenchy told you he packs a knife, eh?

RED. (*Innocently*) Well, why not? What's wrong

with a knife? No law against a nice, big jack-knife as I knows of. It ain't like a bloomin' gat—it's nice and quiet. I packs one myself. (*Takes his knife from his pocket and examines it—feeling its edge*) A narsty thing to argue with, that is, see? An' you'd be surprised how quick it makes a bloke see reason.

DONALD. (*Speaking with stern authority*) Well, I never stand for any killing. Get that straight. (*Goes up to L.C. door and looks out.*)

RED. (*Reproachfully*) Who said anything about killin'? Nobody's lookin' for trouble as I knows of—but a chap's got to fight sometimes in self-defense.

DONALD. (*Coming down to upper end of the bar*) Not with a knife. It's messy and not a bit British, my boy. I'm surprised at you. What's the matter with your fists?

RED. Oh, I can stick 'em up with the next bloke. An' I'm real 'andy with a chair or a bottle, too.

DONALD. (*Going to back of table L.*) Yes, I shouldn't wonder.

RED. Oh, this job's all right for you. You're always masked. But I'm not 'appy about it myself. Once they get suspicious of me, my records goin' to tell against me.

DONALD. If you'll do just as I've told you, you'll be safe. Just stick up your hands with the Wallers when I tell you to.

RED. (C.) I got to act like I 'ates to do it, ain't I?

DONALD. If you like. But don't try to act too surprised or too innocent.

RED. Well, can I struggle wiv you?

DONALD. I shouldn't advise you to. You do just as you're told. (*Going to RED at c.*) When I tell you to go through them you can protest if you like.

RED. Can I say, "This is a awful thing to ask a honest man to do?" (*With a broad grin.*)

DONALD. Yes. But don't smile. Nothing can go

wrong if you just keep your head. (*Goes to the fireplace.*)

RED. Yes, but things don't always turn out as they're planned, or I'd be sunnin' myself on my bloomin' yacht in the Riviiera. (*He starts toward bar. The sound of an approaching MOTOR is heard. RED stops at c., listening*) Is that it?

DONALD. I don't think so. (*The CAR is heard to stop outside.*) Didn't hear the tire go. But we'd better be on the safe side. (*DONALD goes quickly to back of door. Removes a black silk mask from his pocket and puts it on. Takes his hat from the peg and puts it on and stands against the wall so that he will be behind the door when it opens*) Don't forget what you're to do.

RED. (*Going quickly to back of bar*) I got you.

(*The L.C. door opens slowly—HESTER GRANTHAM looks in cautiously, then enters and quickly closes the door, seeing DONALD. HESTER is pretty—rather saucy and impudent, but capable-looking. She is in evening dress and wears a light raincoat thrown over her shoulders.*)

DONALD. Hester! What on earth are you doing here? I told you to steer clear of this place. (*Removes his hat and hangs it back on the peg. Takes off his mask and puts it in his pocket.*)

HESTER. (*Going quickly to him*) I had to come, Donald. I'm terrified! You're not going on with it—I can't have it! I'm sorry, darling.

DONALD. But I've got to go through with it now.

RED. (*Behind the bar*) We got everything planned out, Miss. It's too late to draw back now. They'll be 'ere in a few minutes.

DONALD. (*To HESTER*) And you've got to be able to account for every minute of your time tonight.

HESTER. Nonsense! Who would ever dream that I—

DONALD. It's not nonsense! You've been so much with me lately, if they should suspect me, they're bound to be on to you like a shot. Were you seen coming here?

HESTER. No! And if I were, it's a public house, after all. Open to anyone.

RED. But you ain't just the type, Miss, as frequents public 'ouses. (DONALD goes up and looks out the door.)

HESTER. Thanks! If that's a compliment. In any case there's no occasion to worry about me, darling. (DONALD comes back to down R. of HESTER.) I've been dining at the Chesleighs'—for my sins—and I'm now on my way to the Windfields' ball. Five minutes added on to the driving time on a night like this won't be noticed. It's raining torrents—and the roads are awful.

DONALD. Just the same, I don't like it.

RED. 'E's right, Miss. You 'adn't ought to 'ave come 'ere. Who's drivin' you, Miss?

HESTER. I'm driving myself, of course. (Goes to bar) Give me a drink—there's an angel. I've got the jitters.

RED. What'll you 'ave, Miss?

HESTER. I don't know. What does one have?

RED. Whiskey—brandy—gin an' tonic—port—sherry—ale—

HESTER. Dear me!—Anything!—Gin and tonic—with just a dash of gin and rather a lot of lemon.

RED. (Starting to mix drink) Yes, Miss.

HESTER. Even then I don't suppose it will make me feel any better. My heart is in my mouth and I keep thinking of the most awful possibilities.

DONALD. (c.) I wish to Heaven you'd never heard anything about it.

RED. You ought never to 'ave known about it,

Miss, an' that's the truth. I never did 'old with bringin' women into games like this.

DONALD. (*Sternly*) She's not in on this. Get that straight.

HESTER. (*Turning to DONALD*) I am in—and I do know. I had to know. (*Going to DONALD*) Oh, darling—do give it up—for my sake.

DONALD. I'm doing it for your sake.

HESTER. But I don't want you to.

DONALD. But, darling—

HESTER. I don't want the money. Not enough to go through all this for it. It's ghastly. I don't think I can bear the suspense.

DONALD. Come on, be a sport, just this once. Go on to the Winfields' and dance. Forget all about this. Forget all about me—for the moment. If I get away with this job, I promise you I'll never break the Law again as long as I live. There—now—

RED. (*Placing HESTER'S drink on bar*) 'Ere's your drink, Miss.

HESTER. (*Going to bar and picking up drink*) Nobody drinking with me?

DONALD. (R.C.) Not me. Got to keep my head clear.

RED. (*As HESTER looks at him*) Thanks, Miss—I'll 'ave a spot—just to be sociable. (*Pours himself a drink of Scotch*) 'Ere's luck, Miss. (*They drink.*)

HESTER. (*To RED*) Give me a few minutes alone with him—do you mind?

RED. (*Glancing at the clock*) Certainly not, Miss. Better be quick, though. They may be 'ere any minute now. (*Exits L.*)

DONALD. (*Going to c.—looking anxiously at HESTER*) Well?

HESTER. (*Going quickly to him*) Kiss me—please! (*DONALD kisses her and holds her in a long embrace.*) Darling! I'm terribly worried about you.

DONALD. I'm all right. I've planned the whole

coup in such detail, nothing can go wrong. (*Goes up and looks out L.C. door.*)

HESTER. (*Going to table L. and sitting on it*) That's where you make your mistake. No matter how carefully one plans—there's always—X.

DONALD. (*Coming down and sitting on the table with her*) "X"?

HESTER. The unknown quantity. The unexpected development—the thing you didn't allow for.

DONALD. That's rot! Before the police even hear of it, the stuff will be on its way to France—and I shall be dancing with you at the Winfields' ball.

HESTER. But, darling—I've got a premonition.

DONALD. Darling—all you've got is nerves.

HESTER. Well, if I have, it's no wonder. (*Suddenly*) Donald, dear—suppose—

DONALD. Suppose what?

HESTER. Suppose he's got a gun?

DONALD. We won't give him time to draw it.

HESTER. But, darling—suppose she screams—

DONALD. (*Rising from table and going to R. of her*) Suppose—suppose—suppose you make tracks and stop worrying. (*Takes her hands and pulls her up from the table*) Come on, do get out. It only upsets me having you hang around here and it's dangerous.

HESTER. All right—I'll go in one more minute. (*With another sudden thought*) You're not going to keep the stolen property on you, are you?

DONALD. Of course not! Do you think I'm crazy?

HESTER. A little—yes!

DONALD. (*With his left arm around her—pointing to the mantel with his right hand*) Do you see that mug on the mantel?

HESTER. (*Looking at the mantel*) Yes.

DONALD. It's going straight into that.

HESTER. But if it's found there?

DONALD. It won't be! Frenchy's coming by on his motorcycle in a few minutes to pick it up and carry it over to France. He's catching the night-boat to Dieppe.

HESTER. But how will he get it through the customs?

DONALD. In his tool kit. He's got a hammer and a spanner with a hollow handle. The jewels will go in there. His passport is in order, the customer's waiting for him in Paris—so you see, there isn't a chance of a slip-up.

HESTER. I shan't draw an easy breath until we are safely married.

DONALD. Stop worrying, darling. We'll be married within a week, I promise you that—and be respectable for the rest of our lives.

HESTER. This week is going to seem like a lifetime. (*The sound of an approaching MOTOR is heard.*)

RED. (*Enters quickly L.*) I think they're coming. I'm sure I 'eard a car— (*The SOUND of escaping air is heard from a punctured tire and the car stops outside L.C. door.*)

DONALD. There goes the tire.

RED. (*Going quickly behind the bar and indicating L. door*) Better get out through the back way, Miss, and go round to your car when they come in. This way.

HESTER. Thanks. (*Picks up her raincoat and goes to DONALD*) You'll come to the Winfields as soon as you can, darling?

DONALD. (*Up near door; puts on his hat*) Yes, yes—I promise.

HESTER. I shall be wild with anxiety.

DONALD. (*Kissing her hand gallantly*) Be there in half an hour at most. (*Exits outside door L.C.*)

COLLINS. (*Offstage*) Tire's blown, sir.

WALLER. (*Offstage*) Well, put on the spare.



COLLINS. All right, sir.

HESTER. *(To RED)* Good luck. *(Exits L.)*

COLLINS. *(Offstage to DONALD)* Where's the nearest garage, sir?

DONALD. *(Offstage)* About a mile down the road.

*(MRS. WALLER enters door L.C., followed by WALLER, who is carrying a wet umbrella. MRS. WALLER is overblown, pretty in a common way, overdressed and wearing too much jewelry. WALLER is bluff, gross, pompous and bad-tempered. An obnoxious type of self-made man.)*

WALLER. Confound his blasted stupidity. *(Goes down L., hanging umbrella on bar.)*

MRS. WALLER. *(Going L.C.)* Guy! Such language! Before the barman, too.

WALLER. *(Irritatedly)* No spare tire. Can you imagine it? Blast him! Too lazy to put it on, that's what. Like to know what I pay him two pounds ten a week for. Bloody idiot.

MRS. WALLER. But, Guy, if the tires were all new ones—

WALLER. *(Turning on her)* What's that got to do with it?

MRS. WALLER. Don't you shout at me like that, I tell you. I've still got all my faculties.

WALLER. *(Going to her)* Your what?

MRS. WALLER. *(Firmly)* In private I can put up with your bad temper. I know it's your liver and I can overlook it—even though you wouldn't have it if you'd lead a decent life. But in public you speak to me as a lady should be spoken to. *(Going up towards the fire)* I mean people to think you respect me whether you do or not.

WALLER. You can talk. This wouldn't have happened but for you.

MRS. WALLER. (*Turning to him*) Oh—it was my fault the tire burst?

WALLER. If you hadn't wasted so much time trying to make yourself look human, we'd have been there before the rain started. (*Goes up to the fire and puts his hat on the chair at L. of fireplace.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*Grimly*) If I have to warn you once more—

WALLER. (*Going to her*) Now, Millie dear—can't you take a joke? Of course it's the chauffeur's fault. He ought to have known tires always burst when it's least convenient. He ought to have allowed for it. (*Looking about the room*) Now look at the hole he's landed us in.

MRS. WALLER. (*Going R. a little. Smiling at RED*) I think it's a very nice pub.

WALLER. (*Turning to her*) Yes—you would! Feel at home here, no doubt. You ought to, anyway. (*Going to bar*) How about a drink, barman?

RED. Yes, sir—what'll you 'ave, sir?

MRS. WALLER. (*Elegantly*) I don't suppose you have any good champagne, my man?

RED. I might find a bottle in the cellar, ma'am.

WALLER. (*Brightening*) Well! That's different. Bring us the best you've got. And two glasses—clean. (*Removes umbrella from the bar and hangs it on a peg back of L.C. door.*)

RED. Yes, sir. (*Exits L.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*Going down R.*) Kind of empty for this time of night, isn't it?

WALLER. (*Going to c.*) It's the blasted weather.

MRS. WALLER. And he is out of the way here. I'm glad we've got it to ourselves, though. (*Referring to her jewelry*) I feel safer with all this on. (*Goes to sofa against wall down R. and sits.*)

WALLER. (*Going to back of table R.*) Safest coun-

try in the world, England. If this was America, now—

MRS. WALLER. I do hope the chauffeur hurries. I'm afraid we're going to be very late.

WALLER. Well, what if we are? More people will see us coming in.

MRS. WALLER. How far did the gentleman say the garage was?

WALLER. (*Sitting above table*) About a mile.

RED. (*Enters L. carrying a small round tray on which are a bottle of champagne and two glasses*) 'Ow's this, sir? (*Crosses to table R.*)

WALLER. (*Looking at the bottle*) Looks all right. Open it.

RED. Yes, sir. (*Stands L. of table, bending over the bottle to open it. MR. and MRS. WALLER watching him.*)

DONALD. (*Enters L.C. in hat, coat and mask. He goes quickly down L., his gun leveled*) Hands up! All of you. (*MRS. WALLER rises with a slight scream. RED turns quickly with the champagne bottle in his hand. WALLER rises slowly, looking at DONALD.*) Quick now and no nonsense!

WALLER. Say—what is this—a joke?

DONALD. No joke! Put 'em up. (*WALLER's hands go up.*) I'm a crack shot and I know just where to place the bullets.

RED. (*Makes a move toward DONALD, the bottle raised*) Why, you bloody crook, you— (*WALLER makes a slight move toward DONALD.*)

DONALD. (*Fiercely*) Stop where you are! Or somebody is going to get badly hurt. Now do what you're told—I've no time to waste.

MRS. WALLER. Guy! Are you going to stand there—

DONALD. (*To her—savagely*) Shut up! (*To RED*) You, barman, put down that bottle and strip the jewels off her. Quick now!

RED. Not much I won't!

DONALD. (*Viciously*) Quick, I said! (RED *puts the bottle on the table and starts toward* MRS. WALLER, *who shrinks from him.*)

MRS. WALLER. I'll give them to you. I don't want him to touch me. (*She strips off her necklace and two bracelets from each arm and places them on the table.*)

RED. (*Whining*) This is an awful thing to ask an honest man to do. (WALLER *makes another slight start toward* DONALD.)

DONALD. (*Sternly—to* WALLER) No tricks, you! (*To* RED) Now, barman—the gentleman, please.

WALLER. (*Starts to reach into his pocket*) I'll give them to you.

DONALD. (*Quickly*) Keep your hands up. I don't trust you. (WALLER's *hands go up again.*) Frisk him, you. (RED *goes to* WALLER *and starts to search him.*) And don't cover him. If he's got a gat, be careful. My hand's on the trigger.

RED. (*Completing the search of* WALLER) No gat.

DONALD. Good! Rings! (WALLER *removes two diamond rings and hands them to* RED.) Watch! (WALLER *takes watch from his pocket and hands it to* RED. RED *turns to table R.; removes a large brown silk handkerchief from his pocket and puts it on the table. He then puts the rings and watch and* MRS. WALLER's *jewels on the handkerchief and turns back to* WALLER.) And wallet!

WALLER. (*Taking wallet from his inside coat pocket*) Here, now—let me keep the wallet. I'll take the money out for you, but let me keep the wallet. It's got—sentimental associations.

DONALD. (*Sternly*) Barman! Take it. (RED *takes the wallet from* WALLER *and puts it with the jewels on the table.*)

WALLER. *(Taking a step toward DONALD)* But my private papers are no good to you.

DONALD. *(Savagely)* Get back there!

MRS. WALLER. *(Gasping)* Guy!

DONALD. *(Taking three pieces of rope from his pocket and tossing them to RED)* Now—tie them up. Hands behind them, please. The gentleman first. *(RED begins tying WALLER's hands behind him.)*

WALLER. *(Boiling)* You don't think you're going to get away with this, do you?

DONALD. Why, yes—I'm hoping to.

WALLER. I'll have all the police in the Kingdom looking for you, my man, before the night's out. *(RED has finished tying WALLER's hands and now goes down to MRS. WALLER and starts tying her.)*

DONALD. What fun! *(He goes to back of WALLER and looks at the job of tying RED has done)* You're a sensible person, barman. *(DONALD quickly opens the door R., then turns WALLER around and pushes him into the room.)* Inside, now—more privacy. *(RED has now finished tying the hands of the protesting MRS. WALLER. DONALD speaks to her)* Sorry, madame, but as your husband will tell you—business is business. *(Indicating R. door)* Thank you, madame— *(MRS. WALLER goes up to door R.)* We'll tie your feet together later—

MRS. WALLER. *(Turning to him)* You beast!

DONALD. *(Smiling)* And gag you!

MRS. WALLER. Swine! *(Stamps her foot and exits R.)*

DONALD. *(Calling sternly to RED, who is standing down R.)* Now, you, barman! *(RED grins and thumbs his nose at DONALD and starts tying his own hands. Comes out to R.C. and shakes hands with DONALD.)* Turn your back and stick out your hands.

RED. *(Whining)* I'm an honest man, I am.

DONALD. One false move and it will be your last.

For several weeks, at least. *(He finishes tying RED's hands and pushes out R.)* Now—inside now. *(Follows RED into off and continues speaking as he apparently binds and gags them)* Now, then—your chauffeur will probably investigate and find you here when he returns from his walk to the garage. *(Ad lib PROTESTS are heard from the OTHERS, which gradually diminishes as they are gagged.)* That'll give me about half an hour's start. *(HESTER enters L. and sneaks slowly toward door R.)* Now, then, all comfortable and cosy? That's right. *(He backs into the room)* Goodnight! *(Closes door.)*

HESTER. *(In a tense whisper)* Darling! You're all right?

DONALD. *(Turning quickly to her)* Shhhh! They'll hear your voice. What are you doing here, anyway?

HESTER. *(Displaying a small revolver—jauntily)* I've been waiting for you. Standing by, you know, in case of need.

DONALD. *(Scornfully)* Huh! *(Goes quickly to table R. Folds the brown handkerchief containing the jewels and ties it up securely.)*

HESTER. Besides, I decided both our alibis would be stronger if we arrived at the Winfields together.

DONALD. Maybe. *(He takes the bundle of jewels up to the mantel and puts it in the large mug)* There! All ready for Frenchy, you see?

HESTER. But where is Frenchy?

DONALD. *(Going to her)* Establishing his alibi a few miles from here. But he'll come along in plenty of time to pick these up. Come on, now—our part of the job's done. *(They start to go L. DONALD takes her in his arms and kisses her)* Silly little idiot! Outside, quick. *(Opens door L.C.)*

HESTER. Wait! My car's in the lane—out of sight from the road. *(DONALD closes L.C. door)* This way. *(They go out quickly L.)*

*Car  
Start*

(The sound of an approaching MOTOR is heard, which stops outside the pub. There is a moment's pause—the door L.C. opens and THE BISHOP OF BROADMINSTER enters. He is dressed in correct regalia of his station and is holding his sister's shawl over his silk hat to protect it from the rain. He stops just outside the door and looks about, surprised at finding the place deserted.)

BISHOP. (Calling out loudly) Shop! I say, is anyone about? Shop! I want to telephone. (Looks about, going L. a little) Odd! Very odd! (He looks R. and sees the bottle of champagne on the table; goes across to it; picks up the bottle and reads the label) LeRoy! (Puts the bottle back on the table. LADY EMILY LYONS, the BISHOP's sister, comes in from L.C. She is a very old lady, quiet and demure. She carries a small black umbrella. The BISHOP turns as she comes in) My dear Emily, I asked you to wait in the car. This is not quite the place for you.

EMILY. (Looking about) But I wanted to stretch my legs, James.

BISHOP. Possibly. But you were also unbearably curious, I fear.

EMILY. Of course I was curious. I'm sure this is what they call a pub—and I've never been in one before. I wanted to see what a pub was like. (Looks about with great interest.)

BISHOP. (With dignity) Public House is the correct term. (Goes up to the fire.)

EMILY. I like "pub" better. But I always thought there were all sorts of disorderly people in pubs. I am disappointed. (Goes a little R.C.)

BISHOP. (Going to L.) Yes—I daresay. (Looking about and calling) Shop! I say—is anyone about?



EMILY. (*Going to R.C. and staring at the bar through her lorgnette*) What a lot of bottles! And I suppose there is a different alcoholic beverage in each of them.

BISHOP. (*Looking at the bar*) Yes—wonderful is the ingenuity of man.

EMILY. (*Going R. a little*) I should like to taste them all.

BISHOP. (*Reprovingly*) Emily!

EMILY. But James, this seems so quiet and respectable.

BISHOP. (*Going to C. and looking at the mantel*) It must be respectable. There's a picture of Queen Victoria.

EMILY. (*Looking at the picture*) Oh! How charming!

BISHOP. Unfortunately, however, one cannot always trust to appearances. It seems to me too quiet and respectable to ring quite true. (*Looking at his watch*) Not yet closing time. One would expect the proprietor to be on hand. Of course there was that big motor car abandoned at the door. There may be private rooms and the proprietor may be detained there.

EMILY. (*Looking at door R.*) That's it, I'm sure. Although, no doubt, with your great interest in stories of crime, you would prefer to have stepped into some gruesome mystery.

BISHOP. (*Going toward bar*) Naturally! Wouldn't you?

EMILY. (*Sitting L. of table R.*) Yes—but we shouldn't, you know, James.

BISHOP. Why not? I don't hope that a crime has happened here. I only hope that, if a crime has happened, it has happened here. You see the distinction, my dear?

EMILY. Quite!

BISHOP. (*At L.C.*) This little adventure begins,

you may observe, as so many detective stories do begin. Strangers coming into an old inn at night—and finding no one about—the place deserted and uncannily quiet—and I've always wanted to be personally involved in a mystery.

EMILY. I'm afraid you read too many detective stories, James. They can't help influencing the way you think.

BISHOP. But one can't read too many detective stories, my dear Emily. And I like them to influence the way I think. I mean, they stimulate the imagination—they exercise one's mental faculties—they make one observant. Of course, there are good ones and bad ones. But I attribute my quick, ingenious brain entirely to my almost exclusive diet of detective fiction. I only regret that my duties to the church prevent my placing my gifts at the service of humanity. In fact, I sometimes feel I might have done greater good if I had been a Scotland Yard man. *(He takes a silver snuff box from his pocket, sniffs a pinch of snuff and sneezes.)*

EMILY. *(Shocked)* James!

BISHOP. I mean it, my dear. *(He goes up to the fire, "snooping" about the mantel)* After all, my parishioners are never really wicked. Alas, no, their sins are only petty sins. Hardly worthy of my attention. Now, one who has a natural talent along these lines, developed to a certain extent by reading—*(He picks up WALLER'S hat from the chair and looks inside it)*—might be wasted in the church. You know, I can always solve the problem before I have read five chapters. *(Goes toward bar.)*

EMILY. That I admit, James.

BISHOP. It is really most odd that no one comes. There were people here just before we arrived.

EMILY. What makes you think so?

BISHOP. *(Mysteriously)* Clues!

EMILY. *(Puzzled)* Clues?

BISHOP. Circumstantial evidence, my dear. (*Pointing to ash tray on table L.*) Fresh cigarettes— (*Pointing to table R.*) That unopened bottle of champagne— (*Pointing to WALLER's hat*) A gentleman's hat— (*Looking about the floor up L.C.*) Footprints. (*Goes to bar and picks up glass left there by HESTER*) And those glasses, still on the bar. (*Sniffs the glass*) Gin and tonic. A woman drank from that glass.

EMILY. How do you know?

BISHOP. Lipstick. (*Puts the glass down. Picks up whiskey glass left by RED and sniffs it*) Whiskey! (*Looking at the glass closely*) No lipstick! (*Takes a small magnifying glass from his pocket and studies the glass*) A man! Big, coarse, brutal fellow, too. (*Takes a pinch of snuff from the box, sprinkles it on the glass, blows it off and studies the glass*) Fingerprint.—Thumb!

EMILY. (*As the BISHOP stands meditating, rises and goes to him*) What is it, James?

BISHOP. I was just wondering. They didn't leave by the front door or we'd have seen them. And if they left sometime before we arrived, why are the glasses still on the bar? Bartenders always remove the glasses immediately—I've noticed that. Why didn't this one? Interrupted, no doubt, by the arrival of the party in the big car at the door. But where is the party and— (*Loudly*) Where is the barman? Shop! I say!

EMILY. (*Going to door R.*) Perhaps in this other room. (*Knocks timidly on door, then listens.*)

BISHOP. (*His attention caught*) What is it, my dear? (*Goes to her.*)

EMILY. A kind of scuffling.

BISHOP. Scuffling?

EMILY. Perhaps an animal shut in there. (*Opens the door cautiously and peers in; closes door quickly*)

*with a little gasp and jumps back against the*  
BISHOP. James!

BISHOP. *(In a whisper)* Is it—the body?

EMILY. Three people! Bound and gagged!

BISHOP. Ah! Then it's not a murder. Only a stickup. One moment, my dear. I'll release them.  
*(Goes into room R. EMILY grasps her umbrella as a weapon and stands guard. VOICES are heard off R. as the BISHOP releases them.)* Oh, dear, dear me! Now, just a moment. There—I think that will do it.

WELLER. *(Dashes in, almost colliding with EMILY)*  
Oh, pardon me, Madame.

EMILY. Certainly! *(She goes down R.)*

WALLER. *(Calling back to RED)* Oh, barman, have you a telephone?

RED. *(Coming in)* Yes, sir—behind the bar, sir.  
*(WALLER goes to up end of bar and takes out phone. RED goes across L. and behind bar.)*

BISHOP. *(Coming in, calling back to MRS. WALLER)* You can release your ankles yourself, madame.

WALLER. *(In phone)* Police, please—I want the police!

MRS. WALLER. *(Coming in, wailing)* All my lovely jewels gone—all of them!

WALLER. And I had papers in that wallet I wouldn't lose for anything in the world.

BISHOP. *(Going to WALLER at the bar)* The papers! Dear me. Papers that might involve you in difficulties?

WALLER. *(Crossly)* What's it to you what they were?

BISHOP. Oh, I beg your pardon, sir.

WALLER. *(Recognizing the BISHOP's clerical garb)* I beg your pardon. *(Furiously rattling the phone hook)* What's the matter with these people? Hello! The police! I don't care what police. Any police, you blundering imbecile.

BISHOP. Odd they didn't cut the wires. It's the

most elementary precaution. Smacks of the amateur, that. (*To RED, who is behind the bar*) Pardon me one moment. May I see your thumb, my man?

RED. Thumb, sir? (*He holds up both thumbs and the BISHOP selects one.*)

BISHOP. (*Looking at RED's thumb through his magnifying glass*) Ah—that was your drink on the bar. (*Goes to MRS. WALLER, who is standing R., and looks at her lips through the magnifying glass, comparing the color of her lip-rouge with the rouge on the highball glass*) But not this lady's. No—lip-stick of quite a different shade. (*RED stares at the BISHOP, troubled. MRS. WALLER goes to sofa R. and sits.*)

WALLER. (*In phone*) Hello. Is this the police station? This is Guy Waller speaking. Yes, Waller! I've been held up and robbed—about twenty minutes ago—at a pub called the "Queen's Head," near Tadworth— That's right. You'd better send someone along at once to take particulars.

BISHOP. (*Going to the bar*) I say—just a moment.

WALLER. (*In phone*) Hang on a moment. (*To BISHOP*) Well?

BISHOP. In the meantime, if you'll give them a description of the man or men responsible for this outrage, they can be spreading the dragnet.

WALLER. The dragnet?

BISHOP. Yes! Blocking all the roads in this vicinity so that the thief can't reach the fence.

WALLER. The fence?

BISHOP. Yes—the fence—the place where they dispose of the loot!

WALLER. Yes—that's right. (*In phone*) How about sending out an alarm?—about six feet—wearing full evening dress—young, I'd say, offhand.

BISHOP. (*Going to L. of the table L. To himself*)  
Raffles—Blackshirt—Arsene Lupin—

WALLER. (*In phone*) How would I know what direction he took? I was bound and gagged. (*Hangs up the phone with a bang and goes to R.C.*)

BISHOP. (*Sitting L. of table L.*) Was there only one man concerned in this outrage—er—so far as you know?

WALLER. Yes! So far as we know.

MRS. WALLER. We came in here to wait whilst our chauffeur went to find a garage. We had a burst and no spare tire.

BISHOP. I see. And do you usually carry a spare tire?

WALLER. (*Impatiently*) Of course!

BISHOP. Then why hadn't you got one tonight?

WALLER. (*Stepping down c. Angrily*) Because the imbecile that drives my car came off without one. The tires were all new, he said, so he didn't expect any trouble.

BISHOP. Have you had your chauffeur long?

WALLER. Well, no—only a few weeks, as a matter of fact.

BISHOP. Ah!

WALLER. But he had excellent references.

BISHOP. References, however, may be forged.

WALLER. They may be—but these weren't. I investigated them myself.

BISHOP. Do you recall offhand from whom these references were?

WALLER. No, I don't! One was from a chap at one of the big clubs here in town and the other was from someone in Scotland.

MRS. WALLER. (*Elegantly*) As a matter of fact, one was from a lord, wasn't it, Guy?

WALLER. Yes—a lord!

BISHOP. And you saw these men personally?

WALLER. No, I talked with one on the telephone and wrote to the one in Scotland.

BISHOP. Ah! Then you might have been talking and corresponding with the confederates, for all you know to the contrary. However, we will leave that point for the moment. Whose idea was it to come in here and wait?

WALLER. Mine. I thought we'd be more comfortable here than sitting in the car—and we could have a drink.

BISHOP. Quite so. A natural decision in the circumstances. One could easily have foreseen it. Yes—what happened next?

WALLER. He walked in—aimed a gun at us and held us up. Now, if you'd only turned up a few minutes sooner, you might have stopped the fellow.

BISHOP. Yes, I might have. Too bad—but of course I didn't know.

EMILY. (*Picking up her umbrella and showing it*) Besides—with only an umbrella as a weapon—

BISHOP. And my brains—as our dear Poirot would say—the little gray cells, you know—they count for something.

RED. (*Behind the bar*) 'E was armed to the teeth, 'e was. A proper gunman, if you ask me. (WALLER goes up to the fire and lights a cigarette.)

BISHOP. (*Turning in his chair and looking at RED*) Oh—a proper gunman—if we ask you! (RED looks uncomfortable and busies himself behind the bar.)

MRS. WALLER. (*Wailing*) My lovely jewels. Gone! And such a shock. I think I'm going to faint.

WALLER. (*Going toward her*) Here, here, none of that, now. Things are bad enough as they are. (To RED) Give her a drink, you. Open that champagne.

RED. (*Comes out from behind bar and goes to R. table*) Yes, sir!

MRS. WALLER. I don't want champagne.



RED. (*Takes the champagne tray from the table and puts it on the bar*) What'll it be, ma'am? (*Returns to c.*)

MRS. WALLER. I don't know what I want. I feel that upset. (*To LADY EMILY*) What will you 'ave?

EMILY. Well, a hot drink might be nice. I think—could we have—if it wouldn't be too much trouble, I should enjoy a nice hot cup of tea.

RED. (*Staggered*) Tea?

BISHOP. Tea! An excellent idea. Soothing and stimulating without the reaction of alcohol. The Japanese won the Russian-Japanese war on tea, you know.

MRS. WALLER. Yes, I think a cup of tea would be nice.

WALLER. (*Looking at her in amazement*) Do you really mean it?

MRS. WALLER. (*Elegantly to him*) Why not?

BISHOP. Can you manage it, barman?

RED. (*Scratching his head and trying to stall. Not wanting to leave the room*) Yes, I think so.—I ain't got no milk, though.

BISHOP. A slice of lemon will do instead, eh?

EMILY. Splendidly.

RED. (*Goes behind the bar*) I got lemons, all right, behind the bar.

BISHOP. Of course you have.

WALLER. (*Going to the bar*) Well, no tea for me, thank you. (*To RED*) I'll have a double whiskey, neat.

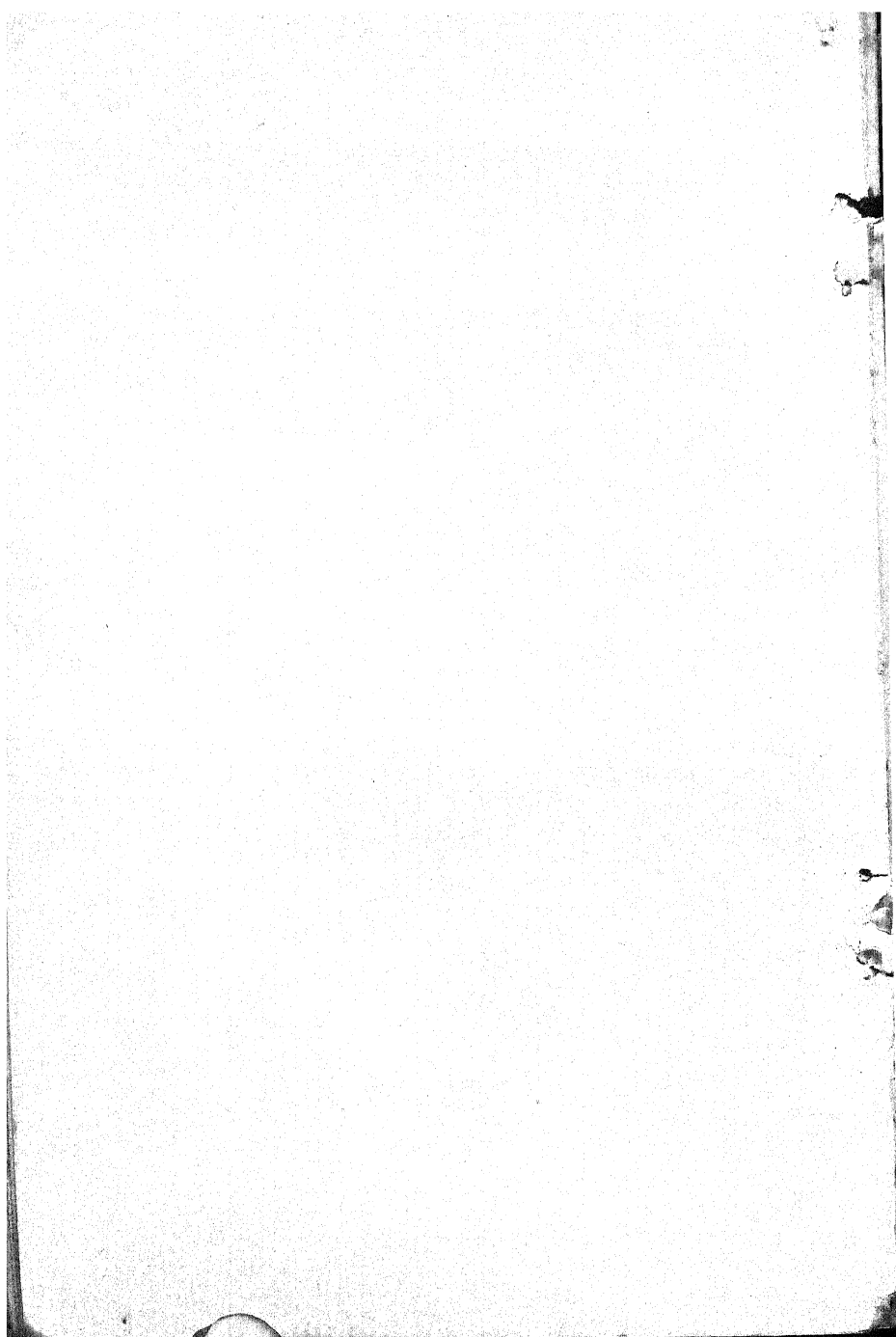
RED. Double whiskey neat. Right, sir. (*Pours drink for WALLER.*)

BISHOP. (*Meditatively*) The Lord moves in mysterious way His wonders to perform. (*Rises and goes to bar. WALLER steps out to L.C. with his drink in hand*) Observe how providential it was, our turning up here as we did. You might have remained bound and gagged in there all night. (*RED exits L.*)



ACT I

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WALLER. Well, not quite. Our chauffeur's somewhere in the neighborhood looking up a garage. He'd have come back and found us. (*The BISHOP wanders around behind the bar, "snooping."*)

MRS. WALLER. But it was a relief to get free. (*WALLER turns to c., facing EMILY and MRS. WALLER.*)

WALLER. (*To EMILY, indicating the BISHOP*) Teetotaler?

EMILY. Oh, no! We believe in enjoying all the good things of this life—in moderation. My brother is the Bishop of Broadminster.

WALLER. (*Greatly impressed*) Oh! (*WALLER turns back to BISHOP at bar. The BISHOP has just picked up a bottle of whiskey from the back bar and turns to WALLER with the bottle in his hand. WALLER laughs at the sight and the BISHOP quickly replaces the bottle on the shelf.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*To EMILY—gushing*) Really?—I never recognized you. And we're almost neighbors. We're at Hill House, you know. Quite near by.

EMILY. I am Lady Emily Lyons.

MRS. WALLER. (*Greatly impressed*) Oh, how do you do?

WALLER. (*Shaking hands with BISHOP across the bar*) I'm Guy Waller—and my wife, Mrs. Waller. You've heard of me, no doubt?

BISHOP. No—I've a very slight acquaintance in the city.

EMILY. (*To WALLER*) I'm sure I've read about you in the newspapers.

WALLER. (*Going to c.*) Yes—more than likely. (*The BISHOP comes from behind bar and goes to L.C.*)

EMILY. My brother and I lead a very quiet life. A busy life, mind you, but a quiet life. As a matter

of fact, I've never been in a pub before tonight.  
(RED enters L. and goes behind bar.)

MRS. WALLER. (*Elegantly*) Well, neither have I, Lady Emily, for that matter. (WALLER looks at her in amazement.) And I shan't be in one again in a hurry, I can assure you. (WALLER goes up C. near fire.)

EMILY. (*To RED, who is behind bar*) But I suppose ladies are permitted?

RED. Bless you, ma'am, we serves dozens of 'em on a fine night. And why not? They likes their little drop of gin the same as you yourself.

EMILY. (*A little flustered*) Oh—exactly! (*To BISHOP*) James, don't you think you had better take off that coat? (*To WALLER*) The Bishop is subject to colds.

RED. (*Coming from behind bar and going to BISHOP*) Let me take it, my lord.

BISHOP. Oh, thank you very much. (RED helps BISHOP off with his coat and hangs it on a peg behind the door. BISHOP stands meditating) I should like to know how he contrived the puncture. (RED goes back of bar. BISHOP speaks to WALLER) You didn't happen to notice, I suppose?

WALLER. (*Stepping down to R. of the BISHOP*) No, my lord, it was raining like the devil.

BISHOP. Yes, of course. It always rains in a situation like this. And, of course, you were not suspicious then. More concerned with your man's stupidity in neglecting to carrying a spare tire.

WALLER. That's right.

BISHOP. However—the car's still out there. We might have a look at it.

WALLER. Certainly. (*Goes up and opens L.C. door and steps outside.*)

EMILY. (*To BISHOP*) Oh—not without your coat, dear.

BISHOP. Nonsense. I shan't be long and I don't

want to be hampered. (RED *exits* L. BISHOP *looks out* L.C. door) Besides, the rain seems to have stopped for the moment. (*Comes back to his coat*) I'll just take my little pocket flashlight. (*Gets a small flashlight from his coat pocket and joins WALLER outside, closing door.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*To EMILY*) Did you have a puncture too, Lady Emily?

EMILY. No, we stopped to telephone. Oh, dear me—that reminds me. We haven't telephoned yet. So much excitement quite put it out of our heads.

MRS. WALLER. Of course it would. (RED *enters* L. and goes toward the mug on the mantel, anxious to get a look at it.)

EMILY. We were delayed in leaving London, you see, and we wanted to telephone Mr. Brooke that we would be late for dinner. Of course he would see that we were late, but we wanted to relieve his anxiety.

MRS. WALLER. Mr. Brooke? (RED *has now reached the mug and just as he touches it, MRS. WALLER sees him and calls sharply*) Hi, barman, what about that tea?

RED. (*Flustered at being caught, begins to polish the mug, then replaces it and steps down* R.C.) It's all right, ma'am, I—I just thought, if either of you ladies would like to—er—wash up—?

MRS. WALLER. (*Indignantly*) No!

EMILY. (*A little shocked*) No, thank you!—The tea, please.

RED. At once, my lady. (RED *exits quickly* L.)

LADY EMILY. (*Continuing her story to. MRS. WALLER*) As I was saying—Mr. Brooke is my brother's secretary.

MRS. WALLER. Oh?

EMILY. Such a reliable man—

MRS. WALLER. Oh, nice!

EMILY. But what I call a worrier—and deaf—

MRS. WALLER. Oh!—Sad!

EMILY. Yes—deaf! You see, my brother was speaking in London— (*RED enters carrying a tray on which are a pot of tea, three cups and saucers, a plate of sliced lemon, sugar bowl, spoons, and a small jug of hot water.*)

MRS. WALLER. Oh, my husband often speaks at public meetings—and the stories he tells me when he comes home— (*RED places the tray on the table between them.*)

EMILY. Ah, tea! (*Picking up the teapot and arranging the cups*) I'll pour—shall I?—I'm used to it. (*RED comes around and stands L. of EMILY.*) I always say I can face anything on a nice hot cup of tea. (*Looks up at RED.*)

RED. (*A little flustered*) Yes, my lady! (*He turns away and eases back up to the fireplace. He is worried about the jewels and is still trying to get a look into the mug.*)

EMILY. (*To MRS. WALLER*) How do you like it, my dear?

MRS. WALLER. Just as it comes! (*RED, by now, has his hand in the mug, but at this moment BISHOP enters L.C., followed by WALLER. RED drops quickly to his knees and busies himself fixing the fire, whistling nervously. BISHOP is carrying a short piece of board with spikes in it.*)

BISHOP. (*Going down to L. of EMILY*) Look at this, my dear. I knew we should find something of the sort. No wonder the tire burst. You see, the spikes are so sharpened that a puncture was inevitable. And they evidently had placed these straight across the road so that the driver couldn't miss them. I found them in a pile in the ditch at one side. (*Goes L. and puts the board on the table and sits L. of the table.*)

WALLER. (*Going down L.C. near the table*) I suppose they could have figured we'd come by here if

they knew we were going to the Winfields' ball—but I can't understand how Collins missed seeing that thing in the road.

BISHOP. You'll probably learn, too, that your wind-screen wiper wasn't working.

MRS. WALLER. It wasn't! I noticed it.

BISHOP. (*Triumphantly*) Ah! (*Rises and starts* R. RED, startled by BISHOP's exclamation, again busies himself at the fire, whistling monotonously as he does so. BISHOP eyes RED as he goes to R.)

EMILY. (*As BISHOP gets near her table*) Your tea, James. (*WALLER sits L. of table L., examining the spiked board.*)

BISHOP. (*Going to back of EMILY's table and taking his cup of tea*) Thanks. (*Takes a taste of tea*) A little strong, don't you think, my dear? And not very hot. (*Calling to RED*) Perhaps you could bring us a little more hot water, eh, my man?

RED. (*Stepping down to L. of BISHOP and taking the hot-water jug*) Why not, my lord? (*RED exits L., whistling as he goes. BISHOP strolls up to the fireplace and tries to steal a glance into the mug.*)

MRS. WALLER. Well, I must say the police don't seem to be in any hurry getting here. Did they seem to know who you were, Guy?

WALLER. (*Rising and going across the back of the table R.*) Well, they ought to. I gave my name plain enough, didn't I, Bishop?

BISHOP. (*Who is still at the fireplace, watching his chance to get a look at the swag*) Oh—er—very plain! Very plain!

EMILY. But they have rather a long way to come, you know. And the roads aren't any too good when it rains. (*BISHOP looks into the mug, sees the bag of jewels and looks about cautiously.*)

MRS. WALLER. Yes, I know all that. But I do hope they're not picking their way, with all my jewels at stake. (*BISHOP looks cautiously around,*



and seeing that he is unobserved, lifts the bundle of jewels from the mug and puts them in his inside coat pocket.) Oh, dear—we'll never get them back now. (*Starts to whimper.*)

WALLER. (*To MRS. WALLER*) Now, now, come off it. You know howling's no good. You don't see me howling for my wallet, do you? (*Pats her on shoulder*) Dry up! (*Sits above her on sofa.*)

BISHOP. (*Coming down a little*) It's spreading the dragnet that's taking the time. And the pity of it is that it will probably do no good. But it's one of the precautions one must take, of course.

MRS. WALLER. Why do you think it won't do any good?

BISHOP. Because the jewels have probably changed hands by now. (*RED enters with jug of hot water and goes to BISHOP.*) Ah—hot water, eh? Very useful, hot water. (*Taking jug from RED*) If you don't happen to be in it, eh, my man? (*Laughs softly at RED. RED imitates BISHOP's laugh—but nervously, and goes back of the bar. BISHOP goes to the back of the table R. and fixes his tea.*)

BISHOP. Your jewels were insured, of course, Mrs. Waller?

MRS. WALLER. (*Glaring at WALLER*) No! They wasn't!

BISHOP. Your best move, then, I think, Mr. Waller, would be to offer a reward—a substantial reward. If this man had a confederate—and he probably had for a big job like this—a thumping good reward would induce him to squeal. (*Throws a glance toward RED.*)

EMILY. (*Puzzled*) To squeal?

BISHOP. To betray him, my dear. (*To WALLER*) Now, if you announced that you'd give a few thousand pounds—

WALLER. A few thousand pounds?

BISHOP. Yes—five or ten—

WALLER. Oh, no—no!

BISHOP. Well, the jewels, as I understand it, are most valuable.

MRS. WALLER. Valuable? It makes me sick to think about it. Now don't you go and get niggardly about this, Guy.

BISHOP. Exactly!

WALLER. Well, I'll give a thousand pounds.

RED. (*Behind the bar*) Bli' me! (*ALL look at him.*) That's money, that is!

BISHOP. (*Going toward the bar, his teacup in hand*) And honest money, too, my man. I don't suppose you know anything more about this outrage than appears?

RED. (*Innocently*) Me, my lord? What should I know?

BISHOP. (*At bar*) Well, he did select your place here for the scene of the hold-up, you know.

RED. (*Indignantly*) Yes, and if I'd 'ah a 'and in it, you can be bloomin' well sure 'e wouldn't 'ave. Not much!

BISHOP. You didn't recognize him, I suppose—as an habitual customer, I mean?

RED. I'll take me oath I never saw 'im before in my life. Don't many big pots come 'ere, my lord. Not as a rule, I means. Tonight's an exception.

BISHOP. Big pots, eh? You feel sure he was a big pot?

RED. (*Uneasily*) Well, 'e was rigged out like one, far as I could see.

BISHOP. Yes—I see. You're very positive, my man. Almost—er—too positive. (*BISHOP hands his teacup to RED. The cup shakes in RED's nervous hand and he quickly puts it on bar. BISHOP goes down and sits L. of table L.*)

(*COLLINS, the WALLERS' chauffeur, enters from*

door up L.C. *He is wearing a regulation chauffeur's uniform.*)

WALLER. *(Rises and goes L.C.)* Well, Collins, where the devil have you been?

COLLINS. *(Saluting WALLER)* It's all right, sir. I found the blasted garage, but they 'ad'nt got a spare on 'and. I got them to run me back to the 'ouse, though, and brought the other car along so's to save time. They're going to tow this car in for me an' keep it 'til tomorrow.

BISHOP. *(Studying COLLINS intently)* Collins, eh? So you're the chauffeur?—Mmmmm—Not exactly a type—according to Lombroso.

COLLINS. *(Glancing quickly at BISHOP)* What's that, sir?—Oh!—My lord!

BISHOP. Oh—you recognize me?

COLLINS. Only by sight, my lord. I was born near Broadminster.

BISHOP. Ah! Well, Collins, did you observe what caused this most unfortunate accident to your tires? *(Suddenly produces the spiked board from the table and shows it to COLLINS.)*

COLLINS. *(Taken aback)* Where did you get 'old of that, my lord? *(Glances at RED.)*

BISHOP. I found it in the road. There were half a dozen of these things spread right across. I wonder your headlights didn't pick them up before you ran onto them.

COLLINS. *(Nervously)* Well, it was rainin', you see, my lord—and—*(Suddenly)*—the wind-screen wiper wasn't working!

BISHOP. *(To EMILY)* I said it wouldn't be, didn't I, my dear?

EMILY. *(Pleased)* You did!

COLLINS. What's that, my lord?

BISHOP. Wasn't it rather careless of you, my lad, to let your wind-screen wiper get out of order—and

neglect to bring a spare tire?—You see where such carelessness has landed your employer?—In a trap!

COLLINS. (*Sweating now*) A trap, sir? (*He looks at WALLER.*)

WALLER. While you were gone, Collins, we were held up—

MRS. WALLER. (*Breaking in*) And robbed!

COLLINS. (*Horried*) Robbed?—My Gawd! You don't mean it, sir?

BISHOP. I suppose you don't know anything about this business, Collins?

COLLINS. (*Frightened*) Me, sir?—No, sir! (*Turning to WALLER*) You don't think I 'ad anything to do with it, sir?

BISHOP. We only wondered. You see, Mr. Waller has offered a reward of a thousand pounds for any information.

COLLINS. A thousand pounds?

BISHOP. A large sum of money, Collins.

COLLINS. (*Looks anxiously at RED*) Yes, sir! (*RED starts sharpening a large butcher knife on a sharpener. BISHOP turns and looks at RED, who gradually diminishes the sharpening and puts the knife away.*)

BISHOP. (*To COLLINS*) I only thought if you did know anything about all this, we might get to the bottom of it more quickly—and you'd have a chance to benefit.

COLLINS. I wish I could earn that money, sir. But all I know is that the tire burst—an' while I was wonderin' what the 'ell to do about it— I beg parson, sir—

BISHOP. (*Hastily*) Oh, don't mind me—go right ahead—

COLLINS. Because we 'adn't a spare on—a bloke comes up to me out of the darkness and says, "Trouble?"—and I says—"Yes, blasted tire's gone and I 'aven't a spare on." And 'e says, "Well, there's

a garage about a mile down the road," and I says, "Good. I'll just pop in 'ere and phone"—and 'e says, "That garage ain't got no phone. You'll 'ave to walk. A mile," 'e says! It was bloomin' well three, I'll take my oath.

BISHOP. That was probably the thief who spoke to you, Collins. Did you get a good look at him?

COLLINS. Well, no, sir, I didn't.

WALLER. Well, Collins, you'll have to tell the police what you can. They'll probably be here any minute now. (*RED again begins his whistle.*)

COLLINS. (*Saluting*) Yes, sir. (*Goes up and stands by door L.C. There is a pause. The BISHOP regards both RED and COLLINS keenly.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*Suddenly*) Must we stay here, Guy? (*To EMILY, apologetically*) Oh, excuse me, Lady Emily, but I'm not myself. (*Rising*) Surely the police can follow us home?

WALLER. Why, yes, I suppose so. They can see all there is to see without our being here. (*Going to bar*) Oh, barman, when the police come, tell them what you can and send them on to Hill House. They'll know it.

RED. Yes, sir. (*MRS. WALLER goes up near fire.*)

WALLER. (*To RED*) And here's something for your trouble. (*Reaches for his wallet, forgetting that it is gone*) Oh, blast it! (*Turns to COLLINS*) Say, Collins, have you got a couple of quid?

COLLINS. Yes, sir. (*Handing some money to WALLER.*)

WALLER. (*Turning to bar*) Here you are, my man. (*Hands money to RED.*)

RED. Thank you, sir. (*WALLER goes to MRS. WALLER, near fire. COLLINS steps toward the bar, and in pantomime tries to get RED to give the money back to him. RED refuses.*)

EMILY. (*Suddenly*) Oh, James! We quite forgot to telephone poor Mr. Brooke.

BISHOP. So we did. Dear me! (*Rising*) In the excitement of all this, you know. (*Going to phone*) One reads about this sort of thing, but one so seldom enjoys the opportunity of actually participating in a crime. (*Looking directly at RED.*)

RED. (*Flustered*) That's right, my lord!

BISHOP. I'll telephone at once. (*Picks up phone*) Broadminster Thirty-Two, please. (*To the OTHERS*) He'll be terribly worried. We're so seldom out as late as this. (*In phone*) Hello?—Mr. Brooke?—Yes.—We've been delayed a little along the road.—Delayed!—Delayed!—But we'll be home very shortly now. (*Turning to OTHERS*) He thought I said betrayed! (*The OTHERS laugh. In phone again*) Yes—yes—quite so. We'll be along presently. (*Hangs up*) He was imagining all sorts of horrors! (*Goes to L.C.*)

EMILY. He is such a worrier, poor Mr. Brooke.

RED. (*Comes out behind bar. Gets BISHOP's coat and helps him on with it*) Broadminster, eh, my lord?

BISHOP. Yes. That's where the celebrated gold plate is.

RED. (*L. of BISHOP*) Gold plate, my lord?

BISHOP. (*Leading him on*) Yes—you must come and see it sometime.

RED. (*Interested*) I'd like to, my lord.

BISHOP. Buried, you know, when Henry the Eighth seized the church lands and rediscovered quite recently in the close. There's a goblet said to be the work of Benvenuto Cellini.

MRS. WALLER. Cellini? The one that had all the romances? Oh, I saw him in a movie. But there was nothing in it about his making a goblet.

BISHOP. I think you have him confused with Casanova.

MRS. WALLER. Perhaps I have. It was some name like that, at any rate.

BISHOP. And there is a charming pair of Fifteenth Century candlesticks.

RED. Gold?

EMILY. Solid gold! One can just lift them.

BISHOP. And studded with precious stones.

RED. (*Dazed*) I say——

BISHOP. And a beautiful fount.

RED. Gold, too?

BISHOP. All gold! And chased all over.

MRS. WALLER. (*Not understanding*) Chased?

RED. No wonder!

EMILY. (*Rising and turning to MRS. WALLER*) Well, goodbye, Mrs. Waller. (*Shakes hands with her*) I do hope the police will be able to help you.

MRS. WALLER. I do hope so, too, Lady Emily. It's made me quite ill. (*Turning to BISHOP*) Goodbye, Bishop. (*Shakes hands with BISHOP and goes up to L.C. door. COLLINS opens the door for her and exits.*)

BISHOP. (*To WALLER*) If the police can't help you, perhaps I can, Mr. Waller. That thousand pounds would be a most useful addition to my charity fund. Most useful. (*WARN Curtain.*)

WALLER. (*At door, grimly*) Well, maybe you'll get it. (*Taking his hat and umbrella from the rack.*)

BISHOP. We can only hope so.

MRS. WALLER. (*At the door*) Oh, dear—what a night! (*She goes out, followed by WALLER.*)

BISHOP. (*Smiling at EMILY*) A wonderful night! A marvelous night! I've enjoyed every minute of it.

EMILY. (*Going to L.C. door*) So have I.

BISHOP. (*Looking significantly at RED*) And it isn't over—yet! (*BISHOP and EMILY go out L.C. As soon as the door closes, RED starts quickly toward the mantel.*)

FRENCHY. (*Comes in L. Hesitates in door and calls softly*) Red! (*RED turns quickly to him.*) What's up, eh? I see cars out front and come in the

back way. (*Going quickly to RED*) You got the stuff?

RED. Yes. (*FRENCHY starts past RED to the mantel.*) But a blasted Bishop blows in an' they calls the police.

FRENCHY. (*Stopping and turning to RED*) The police? Have they been here?

RED. No! But they're due any minute.

FRENCHY. (*Going quickly to mantel*) They are? Then I better make tracks. (*He opens the mug and reaches in for the swag*) Why! It's gone!

RED. (*Amazed*) Gone?

FRENCHY. (*Pulling a visiting card from the mug*) There's nothing here but a visiting card. (*Reading the card*) "The Bishop of Broadminster. At home Thursdays. R.S.V.P." (*They stand staring in amazement as—*)

THE CURTAIN FALLS



## ACT TWO

SCENE: *Hall of the BISHOP'S Palace at Broadminster. A large room of dark oak. Against the lower Right wall, a large Gothic fireplace extends about halfway up to the ceiling. On top of the mantel are two large gold candelabra, each one containing thirteen unlighted candles. In the Center of the mantel is a large bowl containing ivy and myrtle. Above the mantel in the upper Right wall a large archway is reached by a six inch high, tessellated platform. A stairway leads up from the upstage end of the platform. The main entrance to the room is from off the lower end of the platform. In the back wall, covering the Left side, is a large French window, reached by a six inch high platform and opening on to a garden drop, showing the cathedral in the background. In the Left wall, upstage, is a heavily-studded red Gothic door L.2 which leads to the basement. Downstage, in the Left wall, double doors L.1 lead to the dining room. Near the fireplace, facing front, is a large Victorian sofa, upholstered in brown tufted silk. An armchair to match the sofa is below the fireplace down Right. At the Left end of the sofa is an oval end table on which are: a bowl of flowers, a large humidor filled with cigars, a box of matches and an ashtray. Back of the sofa is another table on which is found a table lamp, two small brass candle-*

sticks, a box of matches and an ashtray. Upstage against the wall Right of Center is a Gothic cabinet, on top of which is a large silver bowl of flowers and a telephone book. A telephone is in the cabinet. Left of the cabinet against the back wall is another Victorian armchair, matching the sofa. A floor lamp is Left of this chair. Two heavy gold sconces, each containing five unlighted candles, are above this group on the wall. Two more gold sconces containing three candles each are above the red door L.2. Between the doors in the Left wall is a carved gold console table. On this table is a large silver pitcher filled with flowers. Left of Center is a large library table on which is a desk blotter, a gold desk set, several opened letters, a leather-bound appointment book, a deck of playing cards and LADY EMILY'S sewing basket. In the lower Left drawer of the table is a check-book and a man's photograph. At Left of the table is the BISHOP'S chair. A large Gothic chair upholstered in cardinal red. Above the table is a single chair, matching the sofa, and a similar chair is below the doors L.1. Heavy velvet draperies of cardinal red hang at the French windows and at the archway Right. Above the mantel at Right is a framed religious painting. On back wall Right, between the two sconces, is a large painting of one of the BISHOP'S ancestors. Above the L.2 door is another religious painting and above the gold table high up on the Left wall is another ancestor. Below this picture, side by side, are two 18" x 22" framed pictures, the lower one of which is used as a 'break-a-way' when the shot is fired in this Act. The hallway is hung with tapestries and a red upholstered Gothic bench is against the hallway

*wall. A light switch is on the wall at the upper end of the archway near the stairs.*

TIME: *A few minutes after Act One.*

DISCOVERED: MR. BROOKE is discovered seated in the BISHOP'S chair Left of the L.C. table, engaged in a game of solitaire. He is a wizened little man, baldheaded and spectacled. After the Curtain is well up, he looks up anxiously, glances at the window, consults his watch, shakes his head worriedly and plays another card. The BISHOP and LADY EMILY are heard to enter the main hallway Right. Their voices attract the attention of MR. BROOKE, who rises hurriedly and starts to go to meet them. As he reaches Left Center he suddenly realizes that he has a card in his hand, dashes back to the table, plays the card quickly and then goes toward the arch as LADY EMILY comes in, followed by BISHOP.

BROOKE. (*As they come in*) Oh—I'm so glad to see you, Lady Emily. (*EMILY bows to him and goes to the fire.*) Here you are at last, my lord. I was growing quite anxious about you. *Quite anxious!*

BISHOP. Were you, Brooke? (*Going past BROOKE to upper end of table L.C.*) Well, it's a wet night, you know, and we were delayed leaving London. And then again on the way. (*To EMILY*) Eh, my dear?

EMILY. (*Beaming*) Indeed, yes, Mr. Brooke.

BROOKE. (*R.C.*) I thought you must be. In fact, I very much feared a calamity.

EMILY. There was a calamity, Mr. Brooke. But we were not in it.

BISHOP. Well, we were, in a way, my dear.

BROOKE. (*Confused*) Eh?

EMILY. (*Coming to L. end of sofa*) The fact is, Mr. Brooke, we had an adventure.

BISHOP. A most exciting adventure. Some people were held up and robbed at a pub down the road. We happened in just in time to rescue them.

BROOKE. Where, my lord?

BISHOP. At a pub down the road.

BROOKE. (*Smiling*) It *sounds* as if you're saying at a pub, my lord.

BISHOP. (*In a louder tone*) I am! That's just what I'm saying.

EMILY. (*Going a little toward BROOKE*) They were gagged and bound.

BROOKE. (*Startled*) You, my lady?

EMILY. No, *they*! The people we rescued.

BROOKE. (*Amazed*) No?

EMILY. Yes!

BROOKE. You amaze me!

EMILY. (*Going to L. of table L.C.*) And the thief got off with thousands of pounds' worth of jewels.

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) *So they said.*

BROOKE. (*Superciliously*) Well, I never go in public houses myself. *Never!*

EMILY. I never have before, but I shall in the future. I like them. (*Goes to side of table and looks at the cards.*)

BROOKE. (*Laughing—unbelievably*) Lady Emily—you're jesting!

BISHOP. Our entrance into this one was nothing short of providential.

EMILY. (*Sitting L. of table and playing solitaire*) And the Bishop proved quite useful, Mr. Brooke, in the emergency.

BROOKE. Indeed?

BISHOP. Yes—fortunately my extensive studies in—er—criminology enabled me to make a few valuable observations and suggestions. But I hope

to be of even greater assistance before the night is over.

EMILY. Really, James?

BROOKE. My lord, you astonish me.

BISHOP. Yes—it occurred to me that here was a chance to—er—try out some of my theories and perhaps succeed in plucking—er—brands from the burning, as it were. (*Going to upper end of table and leaning over to look at EMILY'S solitaire layout*) Queen! Queen on the king, my dear.

EMILY. Quite so! (*Plays the card*) But you spoke, James, as though you still hope to take advantage of this opportunity.

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) I do!

BROOKE. Eh?

BISHOP. (*Turning to BROOKE*) Have the servants all gone to bed, Brooke?

BROOKE. Yes. I told them they might as I should be waiting up. Oh, there's some supper laid out on buffet in the dining room.

BISHOP. Excellent! (*EMILY starts to rise.*) No hurry, my dear. We'll have some presently. (*Looking at her cards*) Three—three on the four.

EMILY. Oh, thank you, James. (*Plays the card*) You're not anxious to retire, then?

BISHOP. I'm not at all anxious to retire.

EMILY. I thought you might be tired after your long drive—and all the excitement.

BISHOP. I have never felt more eager and alert. Two—two on the ace. (*Plays the card for her*) And that completes the sequence.

EMILY. Oh, thank you, James. You are quick.

BROOKE. (*Pointing to letters on the table*) Oh—there's a letter from the Dean—

BISHOP. Well, the dear old Dean will have to wait. The fact is—I have a little confession to make.

BROOKE. (*Confused*) A confession, my lord?

BISHOP. I am rather expecting visitors presently.

EMILY. Visitors, James?

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) Well, I left my visiting card for them—and I shall be surprised and disappointed if they do not take me up.

EMILY. Your visiting card? I don't understand.

BISHOP. (*Removing the bundle of jewels from his pocket*) Look at this!

EMILY. What in the world is that, James?

BISHOP. That, my dear—is—the *swag*. (*Places the bundle on the table.*)

EMILY. (*Confused*) The *swag*? (*BISHOP opens the bundle, revealing the jewels.*)

BROOKE. (*Standing R. of table*) Good heavens!

EMILY. James! The stolen jewelry! (*Picks up one of the bracelets.*)

BISHOP. (*Nodding happily*) And the wallet—containing “the papers.” Those dangerously incriminating documents.

EMILY. But where did you get them?

BISHOP. (*Beaming*) Rather neat, don't you think?

EMILY. *Very neat!*

BISHOP. I got them from one of the mugs.

BROOKE. (*Not understanding*) One of the mugs, my lord?

BISHOP. Yes.

BROOKE. Did he give it up willingly?

BISHOP. The mug was on the mantelpiece.

BROOKE. (*Dazed*) Oh! (*Looking toward the mantel. Not understanding.*)

BISHOP. I noticed the barman's secret interest and investigated.

EMILY. But why didn't you return them to Mrs. Waller?

BISHOP. Time enough to do that presently. I wanted to use them as bait. First—to draw the thieves.

EMILY. To draw them here?

BISHOP. Exactly.

BROOKE. (*Gasping*) Oh!

BISHOP. So, I left my card in the mug where the jewels had been.

EMILY. Then we've probably been followed.

BISHOP. (*Going up to the windows*) That's quite possible.

EMILY. No doubt, they're spying on us at this very moment.

BROOKE. (*Sinking into chair at head of table*) Oh, dear!

BISHOP. I hope so sincerely. (*Coming down c.*) It would disappoint me very much if they should abandon the game just because I have taken a hand.

BROOKE. (*Gaping*) You—you w-w-want the thieves to come here, my lord?

BISHOP. My heart is set on it. You see, if I could succeed in making one of these poor benighted creatures see the error of his ways, I'd feel—

EMILY. You might reform them.

BISHOP. Exactly! And, from certain indications I—er—deduced at once that this is not a professional job.

BROOKE. (*Not understanding*) Eh?

EMILY. How so, James? I'm very interested.

BISHOP. Well, my dear, take the telephone wires. A professional cracksman would have severed them at once to prevent the calling of the police. And then the unwiped glasses on the bar. The lipstick on one suggested to me immediately that a young woman was implicated.

EMILY. Young?

BISHOP. The shade. Very bright carmine. Only a very young or a very old woman would have risked it. And the odds in this case are on the very young.

EMILY. (*Haughtily. A little "miffed"*) Indeed?

BISHOP. Oh, I don't mean that very old ladies are incapable of crime; not at all. But the Wallers had the impression that the man who held them up was

young. Hence, the natural inference is that the woman of the carmine lipstick was young also. Youth calls to youth.

EMILY. (*Smiling*) I see.

BISHOP. And then—leaving the swag there on the premises almost in plain view. What would you argue from that, eh? (*To BROOKE*) Come, come, Brooke. What do you think?

BROOKE. (*In a daze*) I'm a child in these matters, my lord.

BISHOP. Yes. Yes. Obviously, someone else was to come for the jewels while the thief was establishing an alibi. Now, how could he establish a perfect alibi? Why, by joining a large party where he could show himself—vanish for a bit and then show himself again—thus creating the impression that he had never been away. Now, we know of at least one large party in the neighborhood tonight. The Windfields' ball. (*To EMILY*) The Wallers, you remember, my dear, were on their way there when the holdup occurred.

EMILY. (*Thinking for a moment*) But if he's at the Windfields' ball establishing his alibi, what makes you think he'll come here?

BISHOP. My dear Emily, the confederates are certain to notify him of the miscarriage of their plans the instant they find my card. (*Turning to BROOKE*) Oh, Brooke, just ring up the Windfields and ask if a telephone message has come in from Tadworth for one of the guests—within the last half hour.

BROOKE. (*Rising and going quickly to the phone*) Yes, my lord! (*Takes phone book and searches for the number.*)

BISHOP. Of course, it's a long chance—but it may come off.

EMILY. It would give us a tremendous advantage if we could learn the young man's name.



BISHOP. Yes—I've thought of that. (*Looking at his watch*) We may just be able to do it before they cut the wires.

EMILY. The telephone wires? But they didn't cut them at the pub.

BISHOP. No—but I mentioned the omission, you may recall, so I hardly think they will make the same mistake again.

BROOKE. (*In phone*) Wellsborough seven six, please.

BISHOP. (*Going up R.C.*) Ah! They haven't got here yet. The police have probably caused some slight delay by cross-questioning the pub-keeper.

BROOKE. (*In phone*) Hello?—Is this the Windfield residence?—I'm speaking for the Bishop of Broadminster. Can you tell me if a telephone message has come in from Tadworth in the last half hour for one of your guests?—Who?—Was that the only message?—Just a moment, please. (*Turns to BISHOP*) A message came in about twenty minutes ago for a Mr. Meadows.

BISHOP. How very fortunate. Let me speak. (*Taking the phone from BROOKE*) Hello?—This is the Bishop himself speaking.—Very well, thank you. Oh, this is Parker?—Well, Parker, I haven't seen you in church lately.—Oh, Mrs. Parker has?—Well, that's splendid. Congratulations!—Two more little Christians in the world.—Oh, Parker, I just wanted to make sure that young Meadows received my message. I sent it indirectly, you understand.—And, after receiving it, he left at once, did he not?—Oh, that was not Mr. John Meadows?—Oh, Mr. Donald Meadows—that's right. And was there anyone with Mr. Meadows when he took the message? Miss Grantham?—Oh, Miss Hester Grantham.—Oh, yes. But she did not leave with him? Thank you. Thank you very much. You've been most helpful. Good-night. (*Hangs up receiver and turns to EMILY*)

Miss Hester Grantham came to the telephone with Mr. Meadows when he took the message but Mr. Donald Meadows left by himself. (*Goes down R. a little.*)

EMILY. They're very pretty names. But do you suppose, James, they're quite charming but reckless young people, who have taken this foolish risk just to get married? I mean, perhaps they're not financially in a position—and yet, very much in love.

BISHOP. (*Going to head of table and picking up the swag*) Perhaps. We'll see them presently, no doubt, and learn the motive. Now, let me see. We must hide this somewhere where it will be quite safe from discovery. (*Looking about the room.*)

EMILY. There's the wall safe in my bedroom. (*BROOKE starts toward the stairs.*)

BISHOP. No—no—a wall safe offers no difficulties to the criminally inclined. We must choose our hiding place with care—with care. (*He goes L. below table, then up L. and back to C., looking for a hiding place as he goes*) He's an ingenious young man, our Mr. Meadows. He'd think of the obvious places. (*BROOKE comes down back of sofa and lifts a cushion, showing it to the BISHOP as a possible hiding place.*) Oh, my dear chap, that won't do. No good thinking of toes of slippers or in soiled linen baskets or under mattresses. (*Going to table R.*) The thing is to be just a little more ingenious than he is. (*Touches the cigar humidor on the table—takes a cigar*) Ah! The very place. (*Chuckling he removes a handful of cigars from the humidor and puts them on the table*) Brooke! Put some cigars in the drawer. (*BROOKE nervously puts some cigars in the drawer of the table, making room for the jewels. BISHOP puts the bundle of swag into the humidor and covers it with cigars.*)

EMILY. (*Thrilled*) Perfect, James. You'll leave the box open, of course?

BISHOP. No, that would be *too* obvious. Closed, but not locked.

BROOKE. (*Nervously*) But the responsibility, my lord. Such valuable properties. So much at stake. (*Strikes a match and tries to light BISHOP's cigar, his hand trembling. BISHOP looks at BROOKE disgustedly, holds his hand and lights the cigar and blows out the match*) Surely you intend to notify the police?

BISHOP. (*Going to c.*) I think not!

BROOKE. (*Alarmed*) Not?

BISHOP. (*With dignity*) I think you will find, my dear Brooke, that I shall be able to settle with these misguided creatures without the aid of the local constabulary.

EMILY. My brother and I will prove a match for them, never fear. (*It is beginning to RAIN outside.*)

BROOKE. But suppose you should fail, my lord. (*BISHOP goes R. to front of sofa, BROOKE following nervously*) I mean, they may become desperate seeing their carefully laid plans foiled—(*BISHOP goes to c., BROOKE following*)—and if they should overreach you, my lord, wouldn't you be—accessory after the fact? And with women here—under our roof—

BISHOP. (*Annoyed at BROOKE's persistence*) My dear Brooke, go to bed—

BROOKE. (*Following him*) I beg your pardon?

BISHOP. (*Loudly*) I said go to bed—like a good chap.

BROOKE. (*Still pleading*) But as a law-abiding citizen of the community, it's your duty to notify the police, my lord.

BISHOP. (*A little troubled. Conscience-stricken*) My—er—duty?

EMILY. (*Rising*) Perhaps Mr. Brooke is right, James. Surely there's no harm in notifying the

police. They can't possibly arrive in time to spoil anything.

BISHOP. (*Cheered by the thought*) Hmmmmmm! Quite so!

EMILY. And it might be useful to have them standing by.

BISHOP. (*Coming to a decision*) Very well! Call them, Brooke!

BROOKE. (*Greatly relieved. Rushing to the phone*) Yes, my lord. At once. At once. (*Lifts the receiver and finds the line dead. Jiggles the hook excitedly*) The—the line doesn't seem to be working, my lord.

BISHOP. (*Excited and pleased*) Ah! Then they're here!

EMILY. Oh, James!

BROOKE. (*Terrified. The phone almost falling from his hands*) Here?

BISHOP. (*Going up to the windows*) Probably prowling around outside somewhere, if they've cut the wires. (*Turning to BROOKE, who has replaced phone and is standing near cabinet, terrified*) If you want the police now, my dear chap, you'll have to go for them.

BROOKE. (*Horried*) G-g-go for them?

EMILY. (*Going to BROOKE*) Why not? You could take the car.

BROOKE. B-b-but if the ruffians are out there surrounding the house, they'll never let me pass.

BISHOP. (*Going L.*) Use your brains, my dear chap.

BROOKE. (*Not hearing him*) Brain?

BISHOP. (*Turning to him—loudly*) Your brains! Go through the Cathedral and out the sacristy door. I don't think they'll be watching there.

EMILY. (*Delightedly*) The very thing!

BISHOP. (*Down L.*) But the car will certainly be out of commission now, if they're at all thorough and

far seeing. I'm afraid you'll have to resort to the Church Warden's bicycle.

BROOKE. (*Drearily*) The b-b-bicycle?

EMILY. It will be as quick as the car—and much quieter.

BROOKE. (*Looking for an excuse not to go*) But it's raining, Lady Emily— (*Looking at the BISHOP*) But if you think best, my lord—

BISHOP. No harm in making the attempt—and you'd be no manner of use here.

BROOKE. Very well, my lord. Oh—I don't pedal any too fast—

BISHOP. That's all right. Take your time, Brooke. No hurry.

BROOKE. (*Resignedly*) Well—I shall do my best. (*Starts to go. Stops—turns*) Oh—what am I to tell the police?

BISHOP. (*Going L. a little*) That I have the stolen jewels but that the thieves are surrounding the house.

BROOKE. Yes, my lord! (*Starts to go again.*)

BISHOP. Of course, if the thieves should attempt to intercept you, you are to surrender peaceably.

BROOKE. (*Emphatically*) I will, my lord!

EMILY. Better put on your raincoat and scarf, Mr. Brooke, it's a very wet night.

BROOKE. Yes—I noticed that. (*Like a martyr doomed*) Well—I'll be off. (*Goes to the arch platform.*)

BISHOP. God be with you.

BROOKE. (*Stopping and turning*) I beg your pardon?

BISHOP. (*In a louder tone*) I said—God be with you!

BROOKE. (*Sincerely*) Amen! (*BROOKE goes out R.*)

EMILY. (*Going R. to front of sofa*) Poor Mr. Brooke. I'm afraid he's not completely happy over his part in this affair.

BISHOP. (*Going to her*) All the braver of him to go at all.

EMILY. Quite! And he can't help it if he hasn't our fighting spirit. (*Sits on sofa.*)

BISHOP. You're not frightened, are you, my dear?

EMILY. Just pleasantly frightened—if you know what I mean?

BISHOP. Of course, you could lock yourself in your room upstairs.

EMILY. *And miss everything?* My dear James, I shouldn't dream of it. Not for anything in the world.

BISHOP. (*Sitting beside her*) Really? Emily, I'll tell you a secret. For years, now, I've longed for something like this to happen.

EMILY. James! Have you? So have I.

BISHOP. (*Astonished*) Emily!

EMILY. You know, as a child, my ambition was to be a pirate.

BISHOP. My dear, you amaze me. (*Confidentially*) There's a criminal streak in me, too—way down underneath.

EMILY. James!

BISHOP. The good work I do for the church only seems to intensify it.

EMILY. I think it's an inheritance from our fighting ancestors. And I'm not surprised that you've got it too, James.

BISHOP. Yes.

EMILY. Did you ever stop to think, James, what we should have been like in other circumstances?

BISHOP. No.

EMILY. I mean—suppose we'd been left just two penniless orphans when we were young. And suppose we'd been adopted by a—a sea captain?

BISHOP. Emily!

EMILY. I doubt very much that you'd have been a Bishop then, my dear, and I tremble to think what I might have been.

BISHOP. Dear me! I remember now when I took your fingerprints. I noticed that they were very much like the Bermondsey Terror's. You know, the woman who cut all her lodgers' throats? Let us thank Heaven, my dear, that things have turned out for us as they have.

EMILY. And let us never be too pleased with our righteous state or too quick to judge others not so fortunately placed.

BISHOP. Amen!

EMILY. Amen!

BISHOP. It's taking them a long time to meet and formulate their plans. (*Rises and goes to c.*)

EMILY. (*Rising and going to BISHOP*) I daresay we shall hear from them presently. We must be patient. Now, what about the servants? Had we better arouse them? (*Starts toward stairs.*)

BISHOP. No—no—they've earned their rest. Let them sleep. Besides, Michael is past seventy, you know, and getting rather feeble.

EMILY. (*Going to L. of the table L.C.*) And Sarah is at the giggling stage and Amelia is too fat to move quickly. Yes, they'd only be a nuisance, really, if there should be shooting or bloodshed.

BISHOP. My dear Emily! Let us hope we will be spared such dreadful things. (*Goes R. to front of sofa.*)

EMILY. Quite! Still, it's just as well to be prepared for every eventuality. Are you not going to arm yourself, James?

BISHOP. I shall be armed with righteousness. Remember Daniel in the lion's den, my dear? He went unarmed among the beasts of prey, confounded them and quelled their angry passions with a word. Surely, what Daniel did, I can do.

EMILY. But these men may be desperate, James, and—

BISHOP. They are accustomed to being met with

force. I shall use a very different method. I shall attempt to justify my faith and turn the feet of these erring brothers to the path of righteousness. Besides, there are no firearms in the house and if there were, I doubt I should be able to use them to proper advantage.

EMILY. I have quite a steady aim and very accurate eyesight—with my glasses.

BISHOP. Yes— but we'll fight these desperadoes with weapons we are more accustomed to using than they are. I mean, in a word, with brains.

EMILY. Well, I'll put away the cards. I doubt I should be able to concentrate, in the circumstances. (*Sits at L.C. table and puts cards in drawer.*)

BISHOP. (*Going to R. of table L.C.*) How about a little bit of that supper Brooke mentioned? We may as well fortify ourselves against a late night. (*EMILY starts toward L.I. doors*) No, you stay here, my dear. I'll fetch the food in here.

EMILY. No, let me go.

BISHOP. Very well, my dear. (*Goes to the head of table and sits and takes out his glasses, preparing to read.*)

EMILY. I'd rather be doing something than just sitting idly by, waiting. I fear I'm not very patient by nature. (*Starts toward doors L.I. At this moment RED's face is seen outside the French windows. He looks in and then motions to FRENCHY, who joins him. The BISHOP sees RED's face reflected in his glasses as he starts to put them on. EMILY stops at doors L.I.*) James! You don't suppose they could have got into the dining room yet, do you?

BISHOP. (*Placidly*) I have a very good reason to know that they have not. Emily, if without appearing to do so, you will just cast a glance in the general direction of the big window—

EMILY. (*Sidling along the table and stealing a glance toward the window as she goes up near*



BISHOP) James! (*She is thrilled*) It's a face! How in the world did you know?

BISHOP. (*Quietly*) The reflection in my glasses. I've often found the trick useful to spy on the congregation in church. (*The CROOKS disappear from window.*) Oh—they're going away— (*Rises and hurries up to the window. EMILY goes quickly to R., near the fire. BISHOP calls to the CROOKS outside*) Come in! Come in! (*RED comes in, followed by COLLINS and FRENCHY.*)

EMILY. James! It's the barman—and the chauffeur—and another gentleman.

RED. Stand by, Frenchy! (*BISHOP starts to close the window.*) No, you don't. Leave 'em open so's we can make a quick getaway in case we're surprised. (*FRENCHY goes to back of sofa, R. COLLINS goes to L.C. BISHOP comes down L. of the end table R.C.*)

BISHOP. And you're quite likely to be surprised—by the police.

RED. (*Coming down R. a little*) Oh, no! We got all the time we need. An' we means business.

EMILY. (*Front of sofa R.*) Won't you come nearer the fire? I'm afraid you're very wet.

RED. This ain't no social call, lady. Although we did accept your R.S.V.P., P.D.Q., see?

BISHOP. Yes, I rather thought you would. (*Looking at FRENCHY*) But this gentleman I don't seem to have met. (*He goes to front of the sofa.*)

RED. Oh, pardon me, Bishop. This is Frenchy—an old pal just down from Dartmouth. Not the college, the jail, see?

BISHOP. Yes, I rather thought you meant the jail. But where is your leader?

RED. Never mind about him. You deal with us.

COLLINS. (*Up L.C.*) Yes.

BISHOP. Yes?

RED. Yes!! You knows what we've come for.

We want our stuff what you lifted—an' we means to get it. Peaceably if we can—but we ain't squeamish. An' if anybody gets 'urt 'round 'ere, don't say you wasn't warned. Now—*where's our swag?*

BISHOP. My dear chaps, surely you know that stealing is a sin—and the wages of sin is death.

FRENCHY. (*Above the sofa*) If you want to make trouble we can take it.

RED. (*Threateningly*) You means you won't hand over the swag?

BISHOP. That's exactly what I mean.

RED. (*Stepping toward BISHOP, menacingly*) Then I'm afraid I'll have to make you.

BISHOP. Oh, no, you won't! You don't want to be hanged.

RED. It need not be a hangin' matter. (*Reaching for his knife*) A bloke can take a lot of punishment afore he croaks.

EMILY. (*Alarmed*) James!

BISHOP. (*Taking her hand*) Don't worry, my dear.

RED. (*Stepping toward BISHOP*) Now, then—*do we get it?*

DONALD. (*Entering quickly through the windows, gun in hand and wearing his mask*) What's going on here?

BISHOP. (*Relieved*) Oh!

RED. (*To DONALD*) I was only tryin' to scare the swag out of him. He's got it an—

DONALD. (*Coming down R.C.*) Cover those doors. (*FRENCHY goes toward arch R. COLLINS goes up and closes the windows and draws the curtains closed, then comes back into the room*) I'm running this job and you're taking orders from me. I told you to wait outside.

FRENCHY. We was only tryin' to save time.

RED. We was only tryin' to scare 'im.

BISHOP. But I don't scare easily.

DONALD. (*Looking at BISHOP*) Won't give up the swag, eh?

BISHOP. My dear fellow, I've sworn to uphold the doctrines of the church and one of them is "Thou shalt not steal."

RED. (*Indignantly*) Well, what do you call takin' stuff away from us and carryin' it off 'ere, eh?—Ain't that stealin'?

BISHOP. No, I call that safeguarding them. I have merely secreted them here.

RED. (*To DONALD*) You 'ear that? 'E's got 'em 'ere!

DONALD. Why didn't you return them to Waller at the pub when you first found them?

BISHOP. I wanted to meet you.

DONALD. (*Surprised*) Meet me? Why?

BISHOP. I wanted to know more about this strange affair.

RED. (*To DONALD*) We're wastin' time, Chief. Let us 'ave a go at 'im. We can make 'im listen to reason. (*Steps toward BISHOP*) Now, come on. *Where is it?*

BISHOP. I don't intend to reveal to you the whereabouts of the swag under any provocation. (*The CROOKS all make a menacing move toward BISHOP.*) To do what I know is right is even more important to me than saving my life. I not only preach Christianity, I try to practice it.

RED. (*To DONALD*) 'E's 'ot! I told you 'e was 'ot! (*Goes past DONALD to L.C.*)

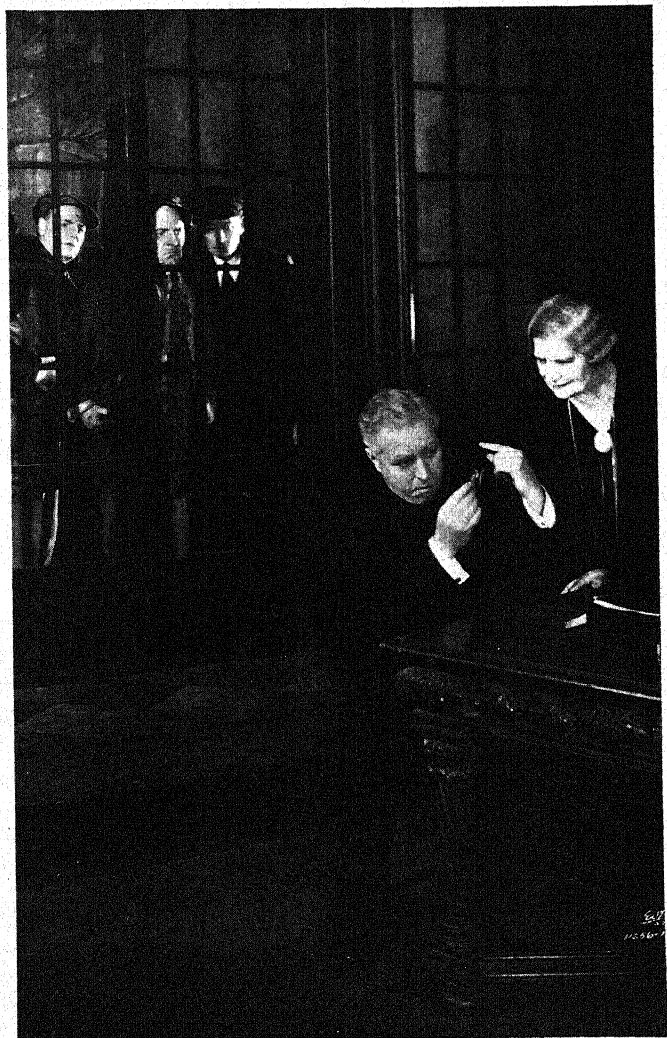
DONALD. (*To BISHOP*) I see your point of view.

BISHOP. Thank you!

DONALD. You understand, though, if you won't give back the stuff, we'll have to find it. We've gone too far in this business to give it up.

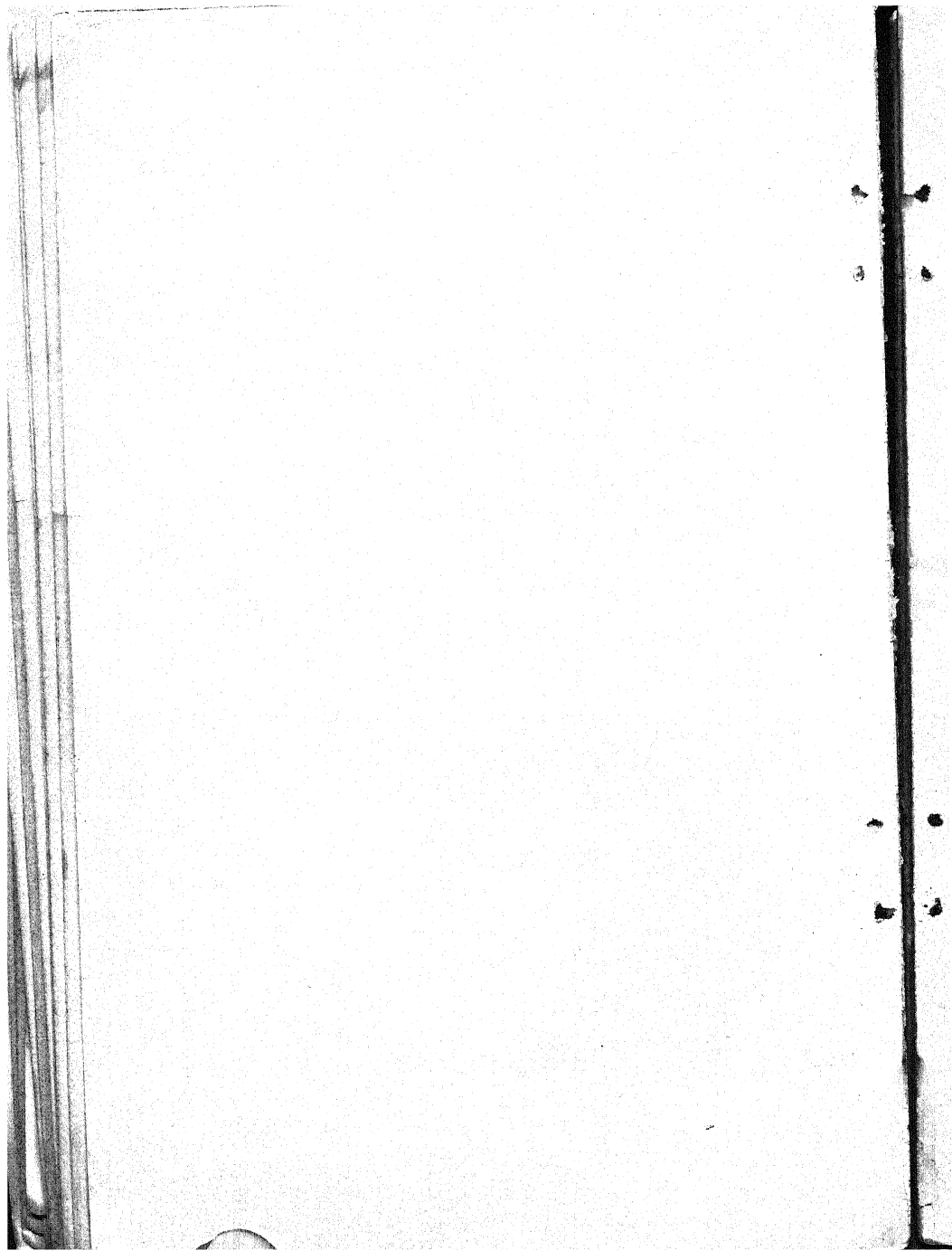
BISHOP. My house is yours.

DONALD. We may mess things up a bit in our



ACT II

*See page 61*



hurry, of course. (RED and COLLINS go to table L.C., searching on table and in drawers.)

BISHOP. That will be regrettable, but I'm afraid it can't be helped. Oh, my sister and I were just about to have a bit of supper. (Takes EMILY's hand and they go across to table L.C.) Perhaps you won't mind if we proceed?

DONALD. Not at all. But my eye will be on you—be sure of that.

BISHOP. Naturally. Emily, my dear, you sit down. I'll fetch in the supper.

DONALD. (Quickly) She can fetch it. You'd better stay here.

EMILY. I don't mind, James.

BISHOP. Very well, my dear. (EMILY starts toward L.I. doors. RED has gone L. and is standing in front of door.)

DONALD. But mind, now—no tricks!

BISHOP. (Quietly. To EMILY) Just bring in the supper.

EMILY. Very well, James, but don't let anything exciting happen until I come back. (She turns to L.I. doors and finds RED blocking the way. She raises her arm majestically, sweeps him aside with a grand gesture and goes out L.I.)

RED. (Dumbfounded) Well, I'll be damned! (He turns and follows EMILY. The doors swing shut behind him.)

BISHOP. (Calling after RED) Yes, I'm afraid so. (Puts the chair from above table to R. of it and moves things on table to make room for the tray.)

DONALD. (Going up R.C. To COLLINS and FRENCHY) Have a look about, you fellows. I'm staying down here to watch him. (COLLINS goes to arch R.)

FRENCHY. (Going to DONALD) Say, don't you think we're getting into this pretty deep? This is more than I bargained for.

DONALD. Take the upstairs rooms first. If there's a safe or a strong-box, break it open. (*FRENCHY joins COLLINS on the platform.*)

BISHOP. (*Going past DONALD to R. of him*) But do be as quiet as you can, please. The servants are asleep and they'd only have hysterics and complicate things.

COLLINS. Oh, then the stuff is in the servants' rooms?

BISHOP. No. I give you my solemn word of honor that your swag is not in the servants' wing.

DONALD. I'll take the Bishop's word for that. Keep out of the servants' wing but search everywhere else. Don't look for them, though, in the obvious places. More likely he's put them under a sofa cushion or in the toe of a boot.

COLLINS. Right you are, Chief. If they're up there, we'll find them. (*To FRENCHY*) Come on, you! (*COLLINS goes upstairs, followed by FRENCHY.*)

BISHOP. (*Calling after them pleasantly*) Seek and ye shall find!

DONALD. We will, don't worry. (*Goes down R. in front of sofa.*)

(*The L.I doors swing open and LADY EMILY enters, followed by RED. RED is carrying a large silver tray on which are a bowl of salad, a platter of cold cuts, coffee service, demi-tasse cups, bread, decanter of wine, wine glasses, napkins, silver, etc.*)

EMILY. (*Going to the head of the table and pointing majestically*) Just put it down there, my man.

RED. (*Putting the tray on the table with a bang*) Bli' me! (*Goes above the table and toward R., speaking to BISHOP as he passes him*) Do you want me to serve you?

BISHOP. (*Smiling at him*) No man can serve two masters. (RED looks at DONALD. DONALD motions him to go upstairs. RED exits upstairs. EMILY sits R. of table. BISHOP goes to his chair and they begin their supper. DONALD starts to search under the pillows on the sofa.)

EMILY. (*Turning to look at DONALD*) Young man, what made you begin being a crook in the first place?

DONALD. (*Stopping his search and looking at her*) Well, you see, madam, it was born in me. I began by stealing pennies out of my baby brother's saving bank.

EMILY. Now you're mocking me. And I'm not really interested. I've never actually met a thief before—not to *know* it, I mean. And certainly not to talk to.

DONALD. (*Turns to the fireplace and searches the wall for a hidden safe or panel*) I'll come to tea one day, and tell you the sad story of my misspent life.

EMILY. It would be lovely if you would—but you won't.

BISHOP. (*Eating his supper*) Can we tempt you to join us, my misguided friend?

DONALD. (*Going to R.C.*) What? Would you break bread with me?

BISHOP. Why not? I bear you no ill will.

DONALD. (*Going up L.C.*) But you know I'm a thief.

BISHOP. The Lord broke bread with Judas.

EMILY. And this salad is out of our own kitchen garden. Do have some. (*Offering salad to DONALD.*)

DONALD. (*Going to back of table*) I'd like to—but it wouldn't be fair. I might have to shoot you yet. (*Goes up R. to cabinet.*)



BISHOP. Come, just a bite. We'll agree it commits you to nothing.

DONALD. (*Looking into cabinet*) No, thanks!

EMILY. What would your mother say if she knew?

DONALD. She'd probably be just as shocked as you are. But I can't afford to be sentimental. (*Searches drawers of cabinet.*)

BISHOP. Now, that I consider a most effective and dramatic utterance—but totally misleading.

DONALD. What do you mean by that? (*Goes to windows and looks behind curtains.*)

BISHOP. You don't deceive me, my lad. You're no more a crook than I am.

DONALD. No?

BISHOP. You've probably involved yourself in this business because of some girl. Yes, that is the most likely solution.

DONALD. (*Coming down to back of L.C. table*) Why—why, you're imagining things. I'm just an ordinary crook. (*A muffled EXPLOSION is heard upstairs.*)

BISHOP. (*Looking at the stairs, calmly*) Noisy fellows! (*To DONALD*) Oh, do have a glass of wine, at least, young man.

DONALD. No, thanks. I really don't want anything. (*Goes to doors L.I.*) I've just come straight from supper. (*Opens L.I. doors and looks in.*)

BISHOP. At the Winfields', eh?

DONALD. (*Startled, closes door quickly and comes to back of table*) What's that?

BISHOP. (*Pleasantly*) Lady Windfields!

DONALD. (*Trying to be calm*) I—I don't know what you're talking about.

EMILY. (*Smiling at DONALD*) Funny! I've always had rather a dread of thieves. But you seem just like anybody else.

DONALD. Thanks, very much. (*Goes up c.*)

BISHOP. He is just like anyone else. The others, now—they are more the criminal type. (RED comes downstairs carrying a small jewel case.) They may have done time, especially Red. (RED stops at c.)

EMILY. (Turning and seeing RED) Why! He's got my jewel case. (She rises.)

RED. (To DONALD) We found the wall safe in her bedroom, but our stuff ain't in it. (BISHOP rises.)

EMILY. You dreadful man. Did you break into my safe?

RED. No, lady. We just gave it a bit of tea!

EMILY. (Puzzled) Tea?

RED. Well, it's proper name is T.N.T. (Puts his hand into his vest pocket) I carries a bit about with me for safety.

EMILY. (Shocked) Oh!

RED. Oh, don't worry, lady. I keeps me matches in another pocket. (Indicating trousers pocket.)

DONALD. (Stepping down between RED and EMILY) We don't want her things.

RED. Well, they ain't worth much, I know, still—

EMILY. They're my mother's trinkets—and mine.

RED. Well, you can have 'em back—if you're willin' to trade—for our swag, see?

EMILY. Oh! (Turns and looks at BISHOP.)

BISHOP. I'm afraid we can't do that.

EMILY. Never!

DONALD. (To RED) Give it back to her, anyway.

RED. What's that?

DONALD. I said—give it back to her. (Takes jewel case from RED and hands it to EMILY) We'll find our stuff all right.

EMILY. (Taking the jewel case) Oh, thank you. (Puts jewel case on table.)

DONALD. (To RED) Now get back up there. (Indicating stairs) Tell Frenchy he's not to make any

more disorder than he can help, but to search thoroughly everywhere. Tell him to look among the soiled linen and under mattresses. (BISHOP *smiles wisely at EMILY.*)

RED. Right! (*Starts to stairs.*)

DONALD. (*Following him up R.*) Then if you don't find it, come down here and look about on this floor. (EMILY *sits R. of table.* BISHOP *sits L. of table.*)

RED. I got you! (*Goes upstairs.*)

DONALD. (*Coming down R.C.*) It can't be very far off. You hadn't time to think very long about a hiding place.

BISHOP. (*Pleasantly*) I don't need very long to think about anything.

EMILY. (*Turning to look at DONALD*) Why must you be dishonest, young man? Where will it land you in the end?

DONALD. ((*Going up R.C.*) Among the millionaires of finance, without a doubt. You don't suppose Waller made his money doing deeds of kindness, do you? (*Searches around cabinet again.*)

EMILY. I'm afraid I know very little about him, but I confess I was *not* favorably impressed.

DONALD. Yet you're fighting his battles! (*Searches in flower bowl on cabinet.*)

EMILY. (*Looking at DONALD*) Is he a villain?

DONALD. He's got no more right to those diamonds, really, than I have.

BISHOP. Except that he bought and paid for them.

DONALD. With other people's money. (EMILY *pours herself a glass of wine.*)

BISHOP. Miss Grantham's, perhaps.

DONALD. (*Startled. Comes down R.C.*) What do you know about Miss Grantham? Say, who are you, anyway?

EMILY. (*Sweetly*) Why, I thought you knew. My brother is the Bishop of Broadminster.

RED. (*Coming down the stairs*) Right, Chief. Where'll I search now?

DONALD. (*Exasperated. Looking about*) Oh! In her sewing basket. (*EMILY takes her sewing basket from the table.*) Under the chair cushions. Under the flowers in those bowls. Up the chimney. (*DONALD goes to fireplace. RED goes to L. of EMILY.*)

RED. Sewing basket, lady. (*Reaches his hand into the basket. EMILY gives his hand a jab with a needle. RED lets out a yell and quickly withdraws his hand. He then starts his mournful whistle as he searches about the room. He goes up to the floor lamp and looks under the shade. Then down to back of end table L. of sofa. He suddenly spies the bowl of flowers on table and dives into them.*)

BISHOP. (*Smiling. To DONALD*) Shall I tell him when he's warm?

DONALD. (*Sarcastically*) That might help a lot. (*BISHOP rises and goes across to R. RED starts to look in the humidior, changes his mind and goes to table back of sofa, searching there.*)

BISHOP. (*Reaches the table, picks up the humidior and offers it to DONALD*) Oh—er—smoke?

DONALD. No, thanks! (*BISHOP takes a cigar for himself and closes the humidior. Lights his cigar and turns a little to C., watching RED out of the corner of his eye.*)

RED. (*Searching back of the sofa, is suddenly hit with an idea*) I say, Chief. Suppose he did get a call through before Frenchy cut the wires?

DONALD. (*At fireplace*) If he'd got a call through, there'd have been no need to send the old chap on the bicycle.

RED. You never know about him—that's the trouble. 'E don't think the same as most blokes. I tell you 'e's 'ot. (*RED again whistles and continues his search. He reaches humidior again and this time*

*opens it and looks in*) Crikey! Coronas-Coronas.

BISHOP. *(Causally)* Help yourself, my man. *(Taking a deep puff on his cigar and carefully watching RED.)*

RED. Thanks! *(Takes three cigars from humidor and stuffs them into his pocket, then closes lid with a bang. BISHOP, relieved, lets out the puff of smoke with a strangling cough and goes to fireplace. EMILY, relieved, quickly downs her glass of wine. DONALD goes past BISHOP and up to R.C. as FRENCHY comes downstairs.)*

FRENCHY. *(Coming quickly downstairs)* If that stuff's up there, Chief, I'll eat it.

DONALD. Quite sure?

COLLINS. *(Coming downstairs)* There ain't a pin up there, Chief, we don't know about.

RED. *(Going to DONALD)* Say, Chief, I got an idea. Maybe him or her has got the stuff on 'em.

BISHOP. *(Down R.)* I give you my word of honor we have not. *(EMILY rises and goes L. to below L.C. table.)*

RED. *(Going down to R.C.)* You been givin' us your word of honor ever since we come in 'ere and you got us runnin' 'round in circles and gettin' nowhere. An' that's probably just what you want. Now, what I'd like to ask you straight is—*would you tell a lie?* In a good cause—now, answer me that?

BISHOP. *(Stumped)* Well—er—

RED. I thought so. *(To OTHERS)* Come on, you blokes, hold him while I frisk 'im. *(RED starts toward BISHOP.)*

DONALD. *(Stepping down c.)* Wait! He wouldn't be such a fool as to keep the stuff on him.

RED. Well, how about the old gal, then? *(Starts toward EMILY.)*

EMILY. *(Screaming)* James! *(Goes L. of table.)*

BISHOP. (*Shouting*) Stop! I protest! (*Reaches into his back pocket.*)

FRENCHY. (*Thinking the BISHOP is drawing a gun*) Look out, Red!

RED. (*Turning quickly and throwing up his hands*) Look out!

BISHOP. (*Drawing his snuff-box from his pocket*) Oh, it's only my snuff-box. Rather a valuable antique. (*Goes nearer to the CROOKS and they draw close to see the box*) And can be quite useful. (*DONALD is quite close to him by now.*) May I offer you, Mr. Donald Meadows! (*BISHOP suddenly blows into the open snuff-box and a cloud of snuff fills the air. The CROOKS yell and jump back, rubbing their eyes. BISHOP grabs DONALD'S gun from his hand and steps quickly back to R., holding the gun on them.*)

DONALD. (*Rubbing his eyes*) Damn!

RED. Hell-fire!

BISHOP. Oh, it's a very old trick. You really shouldn't have been taken in by it. You don't read enough thrillers.

FRENCHY. He's blinded me.

BISHOP. Well, you didn't see so clearly before—any of you. But you will presently, I hope.

DONALD. What name did you call me?

BISHOP. Meadows! Donald Meadows, isn't it? Now hands up, my bold desperadoes. Hands up! *Hands up!* (*They ALL put their hands up.*) Now, don't make me kill you. I don't want to do that. It's against the principles of my church and the doctrines of my religion. But I know absolutely nothing about firearms and if this thing goes off there's no telling where the bullets will land. If I could be sure of hitting your naughty little fingers that slip into other people's pockets, I'd shoot them all with pleasure. (*FRENCHY sneezes.*) Oh, God bless you!

RED. 'S'truth! I told you 'e was 'ot!

DONALD. Do be careful, Bishop. That gun is loaded.

BISHOP. Oh, you're in no danger so long as you don't antagonize me.

RED. (*Excitedly. To DONALD*) The swag is on the old gal, Chief. 'E's only tryin' to bluff me. (*RED makes another start toward EMILY and the BISHOP fires. RED falls to the floor down R. of table. The glass in one of the pictures on the wall crashes to bits.*)

BISHOP. Foolish fellow. I hope I haven't killed him.

DONALD. Well, you're a hell of a Bishop.

BISHOP. Look at him, Emily. Although he's probably shamming.

EMILY. (*Going to L. of RED and looking at him*) Yes! I'm afraid you missed him.

BISHOP. (*Looking at the broken picture on the wall*) Dear me. I was so fond of that picture, too. One never knows where this sort of thing will end, does one?

RED. (*Sitting up. Ruefully*) I'm disgusted! That's what I am—*disgusted!* You, a Bishop, tryin' to take human life.

BISHOP. Not so very human—and in defense of a woman, you know. (*To RED*) Now—perhaps you'd better rejoin your fellows before I'm tempted to improve my aim. (*RED rises and backs up c. with the OTHERS.*)

EMILY. (*Coming a little to L.C.*) Hadn't we better bind and gag them, James?

BISHOP. What would we bind and gag them with, my dear?

EMILY. There's some clothesline out in the scullery. Of course, I've never tied up anyone before, but I'm sure I could do it. I've tied up so many Christmas packages.

BISHOP. Well, those are not exactly Christmas

packages, my dear. (*Pointing his gun at the CROOKS and backing to L.C.*) Now, then—onto that sofa—all of you—one at a time—one at a time. (*COLLINS goes first, followed by FRENCHY, then RED, and lastly, DONALD. They line up in front of the sofa, their hands in the air.*) Now, then—you'd better frisk them, Emily. To see that they have no guns. (*EMILY quickly runs to back of CROOKS and starts to search them. RED is ticklish and lets out a silly laugh as she frisks him.*) Now, my lads—remember, the wicked shall flourish like the green bay tree, but only for a season—

EMILY. (*Finishes frisking them and goes to the fireplace*) No guns, James.

BISHOP. You may sit down now. (*The CROOKS sit on sofa, their hands still up.*) It pains me to seem so inhospitable to the stranger within my gates—

EMILY. (*Coming to front of sofa*) You may put your hands down now, gentlemen. (*CROOKS lower their hands.*)

BISHOP. I'm afraid you must be taught a much needed lesson. The way of the transgressor is hard—

EMILY. (*Suddenly ducks under BISHOP's gun and runs to back of DONALD*) James, I must have a look at him. (*She leans over the back of the sofa and takes DONALD's hat off and then pulls the mask from his face*) I knew it. He's handsome and a gentleman.

RED. (*Looking at EMILY*) Thank you, ma'am.

EMILY. (*Coming to L. of end table*) You! You're the worst-looking scoundrel of the lot.

BISHOP. Now sit back and make yourselves comfortable while we await the arrival of the police.

RED. If we got to await the arrival of the police, we're goin' to 'ave a jolly long wait.

EMILY. But we've sent for the police.



RED. Oh, no, you 'aven't. That old cove on the bicycle— We stopped him.

EMILY. Mr. Brooke? What have you done to him?

RED. *Coshed* him!

EMILY. (*To BISHOP inquiringly*) Coshed him?

BISHOP. (*Explaining*) A technical term, my dear, meaning—er—*slugged* him!

COLLINS. Pasted 'im one on the kisser.

EMILY. Poor Mr. Brooke!

COLLINS. Oh, 'e's all right, ma'am—sleepin' like a babe. I dragged 'im into the garage an' planted 'im in the car with a rug tucked 'round 'im.

BISHOP. I trust it was not a really—*stiff* paste on the kisser.

RED. No—just a little love pat.

BISHOP. Yes—I suppose so.

EMILY. Oh, dear!

COLLINS. Sorry, lady, but we couldn't risk his singin' out for help.

RED. So we 'ad to send 'im to *bye-byes*!

BISHOP. But he will wake up eventually?

COLLINS. Oh, sure!

BISHOP. I *am* relieved.

EMILY. (*Quietly. To BISHOP*) Then the police haven't been notified, after all?

BISHOP. Emily. Just hold this a moment. (*He reaches over her right shoulder and places the revolver in her hand*) Finger on the trigger—finger on the trigger— (*BISHOP quickly runs to his chair L. of table L.C.; sits and starts writing a note.*)

EMILY. (*Holding the gun nervously on the CROOKS, who cower back on the sofa, trying to get out of range of the gun*) I've got you covered, gentlemen, so don't stir. I'm generally very tender-hearted, but when I think of your brutal treatment of that poor little rabbit of a man—

BISHOP. (*Still writing*) Emily, if you wouldn't mind going out and releasing poor Mr. Brooke—

EMILY. (*Still holding gun on CROOKS*) Of course not, James.

BISHOP. (*Coming to back of her*) And if he has sufficiently recovered consciousness to be able to continue his journey, ask him to deliver this note with all possible speed. (*Places note in her hand and takes revolver from her.*)

EMILY. (*Starting up to the arch R. with note*) To the police!

BISHOP. Naturally, my dear. Read it, Emily—read it! (*EMILY stops on the platform, reading the note.*) And if Mr. Brooke isn't able to go—

EMILY. (*Dramatically*) I'll go myself! (*She exits R. BISHOP backs toward his chair, still keeping CROOKS covered with gun.*)

COLLINS. (*Gloomily*) Now we will have the police.

FRENCHY. (*Disgusted*) The four of us, trapped by a bloomin' parson.

DONALD. We're not beaten yet.

COLLINS. You keep sayin' that, but *here we are*.

RED. (*To DONALD*) Yes—an' it's all *your* fault. You 'ad everything figured out.

DONALD. Sorry, boys.

FRENCHY. It don't do us much good—you bein' sorry.

RED. (*Grimly*) I'll get a nice stiff stretch this time. I was warned.

DONALD. Well, what are you whining about? Why can't you take it like a man? You're not under age. You knew what you were risking.

RED. But you said there *was* no risk. You said—

DONALD. *I'm sorry!* But we had bad luck. The trouble with you is, you've got no guts.

RED. You talkin' about guts! That's good, that is! Playin' hide and seek with him, when we could

have 'ad the stuff and been away if you 'adn't been scared to 'urt 'im.

DONALD. (*Angrily*) Keep quiet, will you?

RED. No, I won't! He deserves a sore head for meddlin'—an' 'e'll get it, too, if I get out of this—yes—

DONALD. I told you to shut up. (*BISHOP raps on his desk to try to restore order but they ignore them and continue their quarrel.*)

RED. I *won't* shut up! An' you'll get something to remember me by, you big— (*Reaches for his knife.*)

DONALD. Put that knife away!

RED. (*Rising*) I'm taking no more orders from you— (*DONALD rises with him. FRENCHY and COLLINS rise.*) By God, I'll— (*DONALD swings an uppercut and RED's head is jolted back. FRENCHY and COLLINS break his fall and push him forward, his head resting on DONALD's arm.*)

BISHOP. (*Coming to c.*) And quite right, too. He took the Lord's name in vain. (*Looking at RED*) Did you send him to—bye-byes?

DONALD. (*Pushing RED back on sofa*) Not yet. But I will if I have any more trouble—(*HESTER appears between the curtains at the windows, her revolver leveled, and starts to sneak slowly down back of BISHOP. DONALD sees her and continues to talk to attract the BISHOP's attention*)—with him. I remember once in India, Bishop. There was a most brutal murder of a Marajah—

HESTER. (*Reaches BISHOP and knocks revolver from his hand*) Sorry, Bishop.

DONALD. (*Quickly picks up the BISHOP's gun and takes HESTER in his arms*) Darling!

BISHOP. (*Smiling and turning a little to L.C.*) Ah! The woman in the case.

HESTER. (*To DONALD*) Come on, now. Let's get out of here while we can. (*Goes up to windows.*)

DONALD. Not yet. We have reason to believe his sister's got the swag on her—or at least she *had*. The Lord knows where it is by this time.

RED. (*Rising and going up to DONALD, holding his jaw*) I say, Chief. May I say something?

DONALD. (*Annoyed*) Well, what?

RED. There's about a million pounds worth of gold plate 'ere, belonging to the Cathedral. Why couldn't we go after that?

DONALD. We don't want that. (*Thinking*) But, wait a minute. If we could get that gold plate we might be able to bargain with this gentleman. (*BISHOP goes below table to down L.*)

HESTER. *Nonsense!* Let's get out of here quick. (*Steps up into window.*)

DONALD. No. I won't leave here until I get those jewels. The gold plate is probably in a vault somewhere. (*BISHOP goes up to front of L.2 door, his object being to draw the attention of the CROOKS to the door. FRENCHY slowly goes across to down L. COLLINS moves toward the BISHOP up R.*)

BISHOP. Would you permit these scoundrels to lay their profane hands on the sacred vessels of the church?

DONALD. (*Up R.C.*) I'm afraid I must if you won't listen to reason.

RED. (*R. of DONALD*) We only wants what's ours.

BISHOP. Yours?

RED. Well, it certainly ain't *yours!* I'd never have left you alone with it if I thought you was goin' to lift it like you done. Oh, I thought I could trust you.

DONALD. If we can't find it, we're compelled to try other tactics. (*RED goes past DONALD to L. of him.*)

BISHOP. Well, you must do as you think best, of course.

DONALD. (*Suspecting the L.2 door*) You probably have the keys to the vault on you. (*COLLINS and*

FRENCHY *step to either side of the BISHOP.*) Now then, Bishop. Our swag or the keys to the vault. Which is it to be?

BISHOP. Neither!

DONALD. Frisk him for the keys, Weasel. He's sure to have them on him. *(FRENCHY holds the BISHOP'S arms as COLLINS goes through his pockets.)*

BISHOP. *(Struggling)* I protest against this outrage. You so much as lay a finger on that gold plate and you'll regret it. I warn you.

DONALD. Give us our swag, then, and we'll call it quits.

BISHOP. *(Looking at HESTER)* Miss Grantham, I appeal to you.

HESTER. *(Startled)* How—how did you know my name?

RED. 'E knows too damned much for 'is own good, 'e does.

COLLINS. *(Finding keys and holding them up)* Here they are, Chief.

BISHOP. *(Still struggling)* That gold dates back to Tudor times. It could never be replaced.

RED. When it's melted down, who's to say it didn't come out of me grandmother's back teeth?

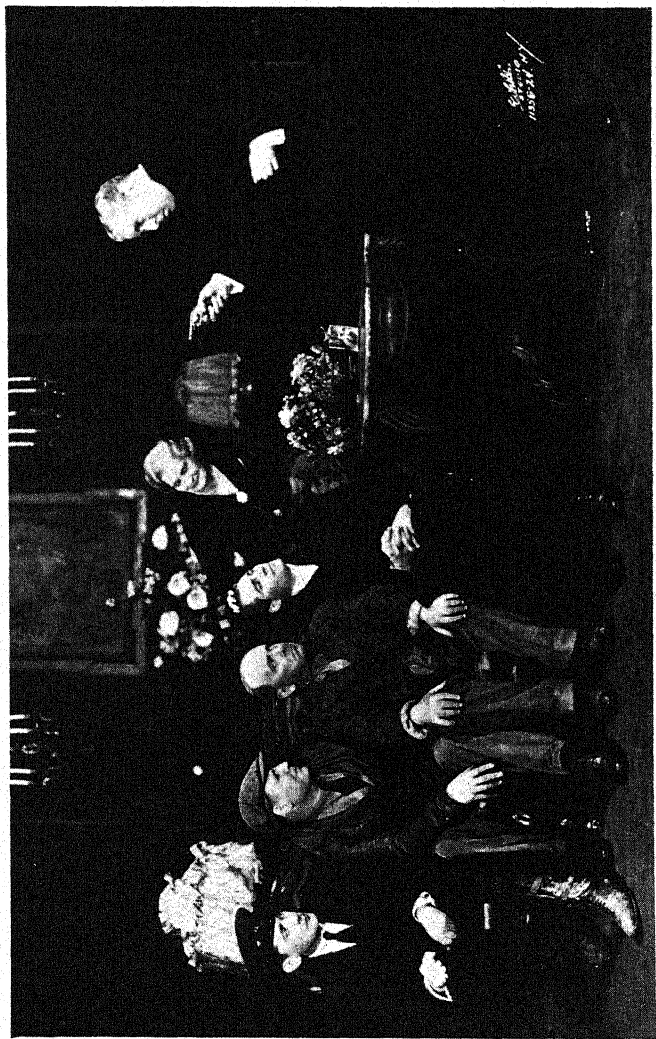
BISHOP. Melted down! That would be rank vandalism. I will not permit it.

RED. *(Pointing to L.2 door)* The little red door. 'E's been hangin' 'round it all night.

FRENCHY. That's right!

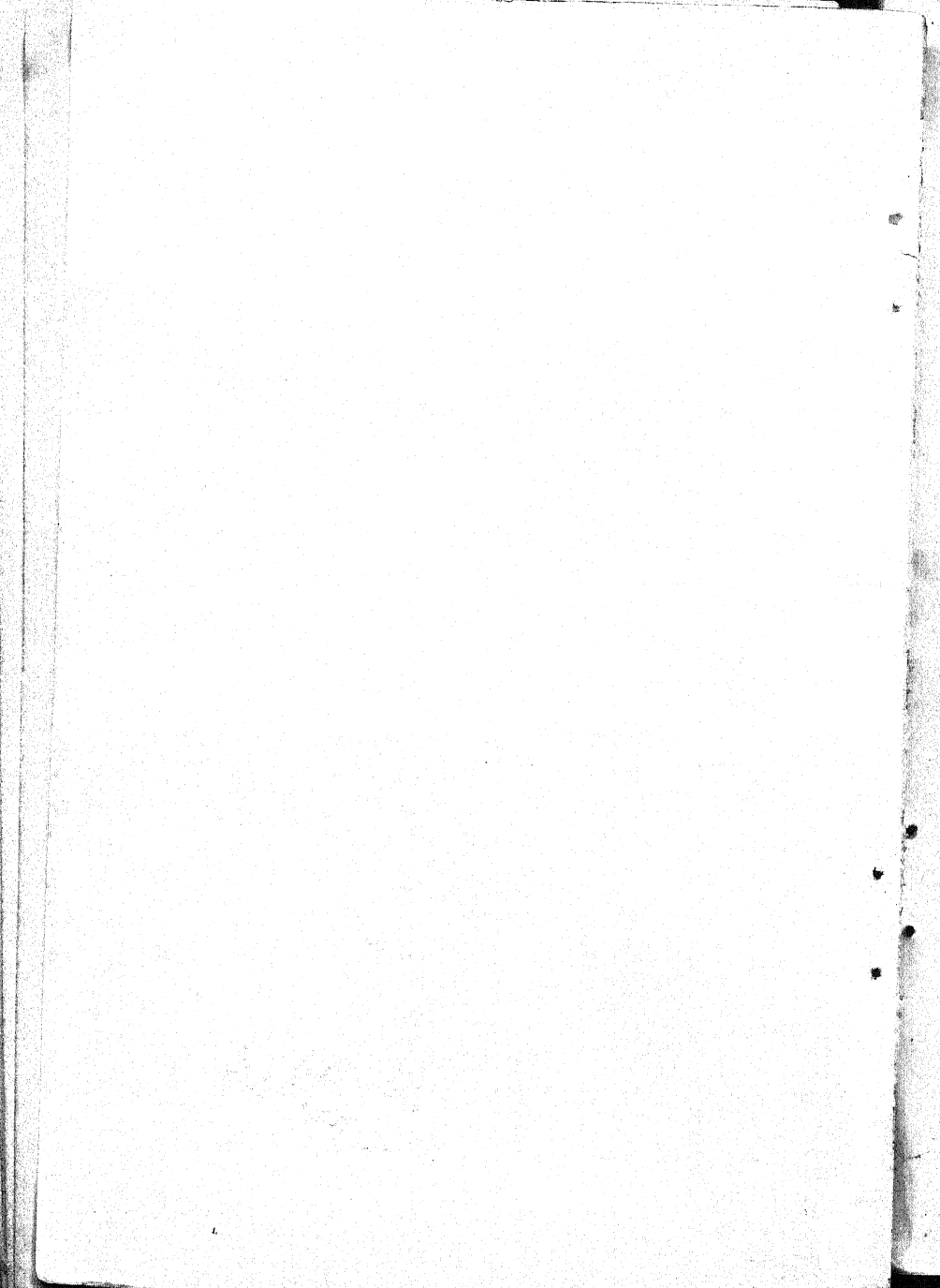
*(LADY EMILY enters on platform R. and stops as she sees the situation.)*

BISHOP. *(Still struggling)* Unless one fights on the side of the Lord, one fights in vain. *(Sees EMILY on the platform)* You'll never get through this little red door because my sister is going to—*(Shouts)*—Turn out the lights! *(EMILY presses the switch and*



ACT II

See page 75



*the room is plunged into total DARKNESS. In the dark, the L.2 door swings open. A faint blue light shows from the basement. There is a moment of wild confusion.) (WARN Curtain.)*

RED. 'I there—where is 'e?

FRENCHY. There he goes.

COLLINS. Down there.

DONALD. (*Shouting*) After him!

*(The FOUR CROOKS pile down the stairs, their voices gradually fading as they go. LADY EMILY switches on the LIGHTS. The room is empty. The L.2 door stands open. EMILY runs quickly across to L. and slams the door, revealing BISHOP with HESTER clasped tightly in his arms behind the door and it looks as though he might be kissing her.)*

EMILY. (*As she sees BISHOP. Shocked*) James!

BISHOP. (*Releases HESTER and steps away from her a little*) Oh—only to keep her from crying out, my dear.

HESTER. (*Enraged. Steps down from the window step*) Oh!

BISHOP. (*Turns quickly to L.2 door; takes keys from his pocket and locks door and turns to EMILY*) But I admit—it was not unpleasant. (*Going across toward the fire, putting the key in his pocket and smiling*) Sherlock Holmes!

HESTER. (*To BISHOP*) You've trapped them!

BISHOP. Neatly! Our friend Red will now be more convinced than ever—(*Wiping his collar*)—that I'm 'ot!

THE CURTAIN FALLS



## ACT THREE

SCENE: *The same as Act Two.*

TIME: *A few minutes later.*

DISCOVERED: LADY EMILY is seated L. of L.C. table, intent on a game of solitaire. HESTER is nervously pacing back and fourth from R. to L. BISHOP is seated in the armchair down R., calmly regarding the situation. As the Curtain rises, BISHOP is apparently in the midst of a "third degree" of HESTER.

BISHOP. And the penalty for grand larceny is fourteen years.

HESTER. (*Stopping at c. and turning to BISHOP*) We haven't committed grand larceny.

BISHOP. (*Calmly*) Oh, yes—Donald and the others have—at the pub. And you are guilty of breaking and entering. The penalty for that, my girl, is four years. (*HESTER remains silent. BISHOP rises and goes to c.*) So you won't explain your connection with this gang of dangerous criminals, eh?

HESTER. (*Almost hysterical*) I've told you I've nothing to say. I've nothing to say!

BISHOP. You're obstinate. And of all human faults I dislike obstinacy most. (*Exasperated*) I'd like to spank you! But, no—no—I mustn't do that. (*Goes to R. of table L.C.—speaking to EMILY*) No—

no, my dear. That won't do. You can't put a black ace on a black two. (*Reaches across the table and slaps EMILY's hand.*)

EMILY. Why can't I, if I choose?

BISHOP. (*Astonished*) Because it's cheating!

EMILY. But it's only cheating myself—and it won't come out otherwise.

BISHOP. I can't think what satisfaction it is to you to win the game by cheating.

EMILY. (*Smiling*) Well, I'm a woman, you see, James, and women like to win, no matter how they win. Eh, Miss Grantham?

HESTER. (*Standing R.C. with sudden determination*) Oh, how can you be so calm and callous—with Donald locked up in that vault—and the police coming?

BISHOP. But you are free to go if you wish, my child. (*Looks at his watch.*)

HESTER. I won't go and leave him in this fix. (*BISHOP goes to her.*) I'm just as much to blame as he is. If they take him, they've got to take me, too. (*Goes up R.*)

EMILY. (*To HESTER*) You must love him very much to feel like that, my dear.

HESTER. (*Turning to BISHOP*) Why won't you open the door and let him go? Why won't you? He hasn't harmed you—or taken anything of yours.

EMILY. (*To BISHOP*) That is true, James.

HESTER. What satisfaction will it be to you to send him to jail?

BISHOP. None whatever. (*HESTER goes down R.*) Still, we must have jails, I suppose—for miscreants.

HESTER. If I make him swear he'll leave that gold plate alone, will you let him go?

BISHOP. (*At c.*) I don't think he'd promise that. And even if he would, the others wouldn't. You urged them to escape once before, you remember;

and they wouldn't listen to you then. (HESTER goes up L.C.)

EMILY. (Still seated L. of table) But I rather think, James, if I had been in their place, I should have refused to escape, too.

BISHOP. (At R.C.) What?

HESTER. (Coming to back of table L.C.) Of course you would! I'm sure you would too, Bishop. He hated the idea of being beaten. Anyone with any spirit would have felt the same.

EMILY. Precisely. And after all, James, they'd gone to a good deal of trouble to get the Wallers' jewels.

BISHOP. But, my dear—that's a very extraordinary point of view. The jewels were not theirs. They stole them.

HESTER. (Flaring up again) Yes! We did steal them! And so would you have done if there wasn't any other way.

BISHOP. To square accounts with Mr. Waller?

HESTER. (Determinedly) I'm not answering any questions. Not while Donald is in that trap.

BISHOP. But he doesn't know he's in a trap. He hasn't realized yet that the door is locked. At least, I don't think he has. (Looks at his watch.)

HESTER. But he is in a trap, isn't he? (Goes up to L.2 door) There's no other way of getting out of there?

EMILY. I'm afraid not. The windows are rather high up in the walls—and barred, you know. And there's no other door. (HESTER comes down c.) Why won't you confide in me, my child? I'm sure my brother will help you.

HESTER. (Up c.) I've told you before, I can't speak.

BISHOP. (R.C.) My dear—

HESTER. I won't speak! Even if I did, it wouldn't do any good.

BISHOP. But really, I—

HESTER. You can't help me—except by letting Donald out of there before the police arrive.

BISHOP. You're being very foolish. How do you know I can't help you? Isn't it worth the risk?

EMILY. (*Going to back of table*) And my brother is really very clever.

HESTER. (*Looking at BISHOP*) I'd be the last one to deny that. Only I don't see how he could possibly help us out of this mess now. (*Goes to R. of table.*)

EMILY. The question is—will he see any way?

HESTER. (*Sitting R. of table*) What do you want me to tell you?

BISHOP. (*At c.*) What's back of all this? Everything about it? (*EMILY goes to back of HESTER's chair.*)

HESTER. Very well. I'll make a bargain with you. Let Donald out and I'll tell you.

BISHOP. When Donald wants to come out—he will come out, I promise you that. Will that satisfy you?

HESTER. No! Of course not. He's so pig-headed when he makes up his mind to do anything, nothing can stop him. And his pride's at stake in this. (*She rises*) He won't give up until he gets the swag back or finds that gold plate. I know him. (*Goes L. below the table, then up to L.2 door*) And he doesn't realize that if he does find it, he can't get out with it. And meanwhile, the police are on their way here. (*Going to back of table*) I want to warn him.

EMILY. (*Going to BISHOP*) Don't you think we might tell her, James?

BISHOP. (*Quietly—to EMILY*) Not yet, my dear—not yet! (*EMILY goes R. to sofa.*)

HESTER. (*Suspiciously*) Tell me what? What devilish scheme are you hatching now?

BISHOP. My devilish scheme is simply— (*He stops and listens—looking toward L.1 doors.*)

HESTER. (*Scared. To EMILY*) What is it? Not the police? (*The L.I. doors suddenly open and DONALD enters. Gun in hand. BISHOP goes to him.*)

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) Come in, Mr. Meadows, come in. (*Pats DONALD on the back and exits L.I.*)

HESTER. (*Startled*) Donald!

DONALD. (*Rushes to HESTER and takes her in his arms*) Darling! Are you all right? (*Stretches his arms and legs.*)

HESTER. Of course. But I've been terribly worried about you. She said there was no other way out of that cellar. (*BISHOP comes in L.I.*)

EMILY. I did! And there isn't!

BISHOP. (*To DONALD*) Bit cramped on the way up, eh?

DONALD. (*Stretching his arms*) Yes! A bit!

EMILY. (*Puzzled*) But is there another way out?

BISHOP. (*L. of table L.C.*) Of course! And I knew he would think of it. But—(*To DONALD*)—I rather expected, with your intelligence, you'd have been up sooner.

EMILY. (*Impatiently*) What other way is there, James?

BISHOP. The dumb-waiter, my dear.

EMILY. (*Sitting in chair down R.*) Oh, the dumb-waiter, of course.

BISHOP. It's quite strong enough to carry one man. The local police warned me once to make sure the doors were always fastened at night. So we do. But I left it open for our young friend. The others will have to remain below for the present until we decide what is to be done. Won't you sit down?

EMILY. (*Indicating the couch*) Do sit down, my dear.

HESTER. (*Dazed*) Thanks! (*Goes to sofa and sits.*)

DONALD. But what made you think I'd come up that way?

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) Oh, I knew you'd become uneasy about Miss Grantham as soon as you realized that the door was locked upon you, and there was no other way you could possibly come up.

DONALD. (*At L.C.*) Very neat!

BISHOP. A simple exercise in logical deduction, my boy. Philo Vance, you know.

DONALD. But it wasn't only that I was concerned about her. Red is determined to get his hands on that gold plate down there.

BISHOP. Is he? Dear me!

DONALD. (*Threateningly*) Oh, yes! They're at the door of the vault now.

EMILY. The door of the vault?

BISHOP. So? How did they know it was the door to the vault?

DONALD. It's the only door down there that's locked.

BISHOP. Oh, I see.

EMILY. (*Suddenly*) James! You don't suppose they'll—

BISHOP. (*Interrupting her quickly*) No—no—Don't worry, my dear, I'm not worrying.

DONALD. (*To R. of table. Trying to scare BISHOP*) Well, I'd rather not have them do it, and I told them so. I wanted to have one more try at urging you to return our swag.

BISHOP. I'm sorry; I'm afraid that's quite impossible.

DONALD. (*Threateningly*) Then I don't know how I'm going to stop them from going after that gold.

BISHOP. (*Sitting L. of L.C. table*) But the gold isn't down there at all.

HESTER. (*Rising and going to R.C.*) It's not down there?

DONALD. But that locked door down there?

BISHOP. Oh, that door? There's nothing of value in there.

EMILY. (*Indignantly*) Except my jams and jellies.

BISHOP. Yes, my sister takes great pride in her jams and jellies. Most careful to keep them under lock and key. Particularly as our older butler, Michael, has a sweet tooth. One tooth—but it's sweet.

DONALD. (*Pointing to the L.2 door*) But the way you guarded this door, I thought—

BISHOP. Exactly what I intended you to think, my boy. I'm really not simple enough to give you such a lead to the treasures of the church. Not really. No!

HESTER. (*Sitting on edge of end table R.*) Well, I'll be—dashed!

DONALD. (*Looking at HESTER*) So they've got the keys but the vault isn't there!

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) They haven't got the keys, either.

DONALD. (*Dumbfounded*) What? After that struggle you put up, they haven't got the keys?

BISHOP. You don't suppose I'd carry them about with me at the disposal of any thug with a piece of lead pipe. My dear boy—is it likely?

DONALD. (*Helplessly*) Bishop—do you play poker?

BISHOP. No—but I've always fancied I'd be rather good at it.

DONALD. (*Giving up*) Well—I throw in my hand!

BISHOP. Splendid! Now, if Miss Grantham and I can put our heads together we may be able to solve this very vexing problem of yours.

DONALD. (*Skeptically*) Indeed?

HESTER. (*Rising and going to DONALD*) Why not,

Donald? It can't do any harm now, and the Bishop thinks he might be able to help us.

DONALD. Well, if he thinks he might—he might!

BISHOP. (*Takes paper and pen and writes as they talk to him*) Shoot! (*Looking across to EMILY and explaining*) American vernacular, my dear, meaning “proceed.” (*DONALD goes up R., takes off his top-coat and puts it on chair*) Now, Miss Grant-ham?

HESTER. (*Going to upper end of table L.C.*) Well, Mr. Waller was a friend of my father's—

DONALD. (*Coming down to R. of HESTER*) Yes—and he robbed her.

HESTER. Only we're helpless because we can't prove it.

EMILY. (*Rising and going to table L.C.*) I knew it! I never did like that man from my first glimpse of him. (*Sits R. of table.*)

HESTER. My father and Mr. Waller went into a business deal together—

BISHOP. (*Interrupting her*) Your father's name was—?

HESTER. Sir John Grantham.

BISHOP. (*Writing*) Oh, yes—

HESTER. And the arrangement was that each should put up half the money, only my father wasn't a business man and he trusted Mr. Waller—so they never signed any agreement.

BISHOP. I see. And now Mr. Waller denies that your father was ever concerned in the deal.

HESTER. Yes. After father died, Donald consulted with the lawyers, but they say we haven't a case.

DONALD. You see, all we've got is a letter from her father mentioning the transaction, but, of course, that isn't definite proof.

BISHOP. May I see that letter?

DONALD. Certainly. I've got it with me. (*He re-*



*moves letter from his pocket and hands it to BISHOP.*)

HESTER. I thought if things should go against us and Donald got caught, he could at least produce it and show why we went to such lengths.

EMILY. That man must be a real wrong one to do such a shabby trick.

BISHOP. *(Looking at letter)* This is your father's handwriting?

HESTER. Yes, of course.

BISHOP. Waller! The scoundrel!

DONALD. He is! That's why I decided to take the jewels. They're about the only property of his I could think of that we could get our hands on. *(Turns away to c. a little.)*

BISHOP. I'm not sure that taking the Law into your own hands—

EMILY. I think it was a splendid plan and absolutely justified.

HESTER. Do you really?

EMILY. Indeed I do. And I admire the young man's courage. James, we must give them the jewels and let them go at once.

BISHOP. *(Shocked)* My dear Emily! I'm afraid we can't do that.

EMILY. Can't?—Why not?

BISHOP. We'd be compounding a felony.

EMILY. Compounding fiddlesticks. Nobody'd be able to prove anything.

BISHOP. That doesn't affect the case at all.

EMILY. I mean we'd simply be doing to that Mr. Waller what he has done to these children.

BISHOP. Besides—you forget my note to Waller. I told him if he'd come here, I could help him recover his stolen property.

DONALD. *(Surprised)* You sent Waller a note?

BISHOP. Yes, by Brooke, you know.

DONALD. But I thought you sent Brooke for the—

BISHOP. Exactly!

HESTER. (*Stepping down c. a little*) Then you haven't summoned the police?

BISHOP. No! I felt sure we could adjust this matter more satisfactorily among ourselves.

HESTER. But you let me think—

BISHOP. Yes. I apologize for the deception.

HESTER. (*Exasperated*) Oh! (*Stamps her foot and goes down R.*)

BISHOP. But I had to persuade you to talk. (*To DONALD*) You're not sorry I didn't call the police?

DONALD. (*c. Glancing at HESTER*) No—we're not sorry. So it's Waller who's on his way here?

BISHOP. Yes. He is certain to come when he receives my note.

EMILY. I've got an idea. We can say we were overpowered and the jewels taken from us. I don't mind a lie in a good cause either. You admitted to Red that you didn't, James.

BISHOP. (*Shocked*) My dear Emily—

EMILY. We simply cannot let that man succeed in his villainy. Not without making some effort to circumvent him. If you won't be a party to it, James, I'll give them the swag! I'll compound a felony. And I dare that man to try to bring the charge home to me. (*Rises and starts toward humidor on end table R.C.*)

BISHOP. (*Is writing and suddenly looks up as EMILY reaches humidor. Calls loudly*) Emily! (*She stops.*) I forbid you to implicate yourself in this way.

DONALD. (*Back of end table*) He's quite right, Lady Emily! You can't afford to involve yourself.

HESTER. (*In front of couch*) After all, you must remember your brother is a Bishop.

EMILY. (*Delivering an ultimatum*) Very well! If I'm not to be allowed to help them in any way,

*moves letter from his pocket and hands it to BISHOP.)*

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EMILY. Can't?—Why not?

BISHOP. We'd be compounding a felony.

EMILY. Compounding fiddlesticks. Nobody'd be able to prove anything.

BISHOP. That doesn't affect the case at all.

EMILY. I mean we'd simply be doing to that Mr. Waller what he has done to these children.

BISHOP. Besides—you forget my note to Waller. I told him if he'd come here, I could help him recover his stolen property.

DONALD. *(Surprised)* You sent Waller a note?

BISHOP. Yes, by Brooke, you know.

DONALD. But I thought you sent Brooke for the—

BISHOP. Exactly!

HESTER. (*Stepping down c. a little*) Then you haven't summoned the police?

BISHOP. No! I felt sure we could adjust this matter more satisfactorily among ourselves.

HESTER. But you let me think—

BISHOP. Yes. I apologize for the deception.

HESTER. (*Exasperated*) Oh! (*Stamps her foot and goes down R.*)

BISHOP. But I had to persuade you to talk. (*To DONALD*) You're not sorry I didn't call the police?

DONALD. (*c. Glancing at HESTER*) No—we're not sorry. So it's Waller who's on his way here?

BISHOP. Yes. He is certain to come when he receives my note.

EMILY. I've got an idea. We can say we were overpowered and the jewels taken from us. I don't mind a lie in a good cause either. You admitted to Red that you didn't, James.

BISHOP. (*Shocked*) My dear Emily—

EMILY. We simply cannot let that man succeed in his villainy. Not without making some effort to circumvent him. If you won't be a party to it, James, I'll give them the swag! I'll compound a felony. And I dare that man to try to bring the charge home to me. (*Rises and starts toward humidior on end table R.C.*)

BISHOP. (*Is writing and suddenly looks up as EMILY reaches humidior. Calls loudly*) Emily! (*She stops.*) I forbid you to implicate yourself in this way.

DONALD. (*Back of end table*) He's quite right, Lady Emily! You can't afford to involve yourself.

HESTER. (*In front of couch*) After all, you must remember your brother is a Bishop.

EMILY. (*Delivering an ultimatum*) Very well! If I'm not to be allowed to help them in any way,

James, you must help them in your way. (*Going to R. of table L.C.*) You needn't sit there looking so helpless. Something devilishly ingenious is working itself out in that brain of yours.

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) Naturally, my dear, naturally. And I'm inclined to think that the solution I have in mind may be more satisfactory.

HESTER. (*Kneeling on sofa*) All right! Shoot!

BISHOP. Well, our young friend here not only got Mr. Waller's jewels in the holdup, but Mr. Waller's pocket-case as well.

DONALD. (*Standing R.C.*) That's right!

HESTER. Yes.

BISHOP. I observed at the time that Waller seemed more concerned over the loss of that pocket-case than over the loss of the jewels.

EMILY. He did. I remember.

HESTER. You mean there was a large sum of money in the pocket-case?

BISHOP. Perhaps. But even more than that—the papers?

DONALD. The papers?

BISHOP. Yes! I have not had time to look—but there are always the papers. In this instance, they are letters, I should think. Letters of a definitely compromising nature.

DONALD. And you've got those letters as well as the jewels?

BISHOP. Oh, yes—I've got them. You see an honest man isn't likely to be carrying compromising documents about with him. In fact, an honest man isn't likely to fear any sort of document. Of course, I haven't read them yet.

EMILY. James. You don't seriously intend to read that man's private papers?

BISHOP. I do.

HESTER. Bravo!

BISHOP. It is most unethical, I admit, but it is neither a crime nor a misdemeanor in Law.

DONALD. (*Applauding*) Hear! Hear!

BISHOP. And I feel, in the circumstances, that the—er—end justifies the means. (*He rises.*)

EMILY. I'm so glad. I should like to know more about that dreadful man.

BISHOP. (*Going below the table across to R.*) You? It depends on the nature of the documents as to whether I take you into my confidence at all or not. (*Going to humidor on table R.C.*)

EMILY. (*Sitting R. of table L.C.*) Oh, James! That would be most unfair.

BISHOP. (*Offering the humidor to DONALD*) I beg your pardon. Smoke?

DONALD. No, thanks! What I can't understand is how you came to mix up in all this.

BISHOP. Well, we didn't deliberately mix up in it. We got mixed up in it. Divine Providence, perhaps.

EMILY. Mr. Waller won't think it divine.

DONALD. And speaking of Mr. Waller, how about having a look at the documents in the case?

BISHOP. Yes—I was thinking of that—but the fact is, I can't at the moment without revealing the whereabouts of the—er—swag!

HESTER. (*Smiling*) I see.

DONALD. Then it was in this room all the time.

BISHOP. Yes—right here! (*To EMILY*) Now, my dear, if you would just take them into the dining room for a few minutes—

EMILY. (*Rising*) Certainly. (*HESTER and DONALD go across to L.*) And I'll show them the portrait of our great-grand-uncle, the Cardinal. A most Machiavellian man. (*To HESTER and DONALD*) My brother takes after him.

BISHOP. And you might show them old Gaunt—the smuggler—my sister takes after him. (*HESTER*

and DONALD laugh as they start toward L.I. doors. The sound of an approaching MOTOR is heard.)

DONALD. Will that be Waller, do you think? (Goes to window L.C. and peers out through the curtains.)

BISHOP. Most likely. (DONALD goes back to up L., above the table.)

HESTER. But you haven't had time to examine his papers.

BISHOP. No. Too bad. (To DONALD. Going to L.C. CAR is heard to stop outside) Oh, my dear boy—might I suggest that you put yourself out to be nice to Mrs. Waller?

DONALD. Mrs. Waller?

BISHOP. It might be useful.

DONALD. (Hesitating) Well—

HESTER. I don't mind.—Go ahead. (Joins DONALD at upstage end of table L.C.)

DONALD. All right. If you think there's any purpose to be served.

BISHOP. There might be. I observed at the pub they were not in perfect accord. (MRS. WALLER, followed by MR. WALLER, comes in R.) Come in, my dear—come in. I'm glad to see you. (Shaking hands with MRS. WALLER.)

MRS. WALLER. It's a pleasure, Bishop, I assure you. (Bowing and smirking to EMILY) Ah—Lady Emily. (Goes to R. of the table L.C. DONALD places a chair for her and she sits.)

WALLER. Well, my lord—did you get my wallet with the jewels?

BISHOP. Yes—we have them. (WALLER, relieved, goes down R.) So Brooke got to you safely, eh? (BROOKE enters R., sporting a black eye and in a generally "mussed up" condition.)

MRS. WALLER. Yes—but look at the poor man.

BROOKE. (Painfully—to BISHOP) I've got a black eye, my lord.

BISHOP. I see you have.

EMILY. (*Standing down L.*) Poor Mr. Brooke.

BISHOP. (*Looking at BROOKE*) Hmmmm— Too bad! I told you to surrender peaceably, you know.

BROOKE. I was given no opportunity, my lord. They wouldn't permit me to.

BISHOP. Dear me!

BROOKE. The ruffians attacked me without warning.

DONALD. Disgraceful!

BISHOP. (*Making the introductions*) Oh—Mr. and Mrs. Waller—Miss Grantham. (*WALLER looks uncomfortable at sight of HESTER*) And—Mr. Meadows.

MRS. WALLER. (*Looking up at DONALD*) Meadows? Really? I've met you somewhere, I'm sure.

DONALD. Yes—but I didn't think you'd remember me.

BISHOP. (*Introducing BROOKE to HESTER and DONALD*) And this is my secretary, Mr. Brooke.

DONALD and HESTER. (*To BROOKE*) How do you do?

BROOKE. Not too well at the moment.

BISHOP. He doesn't usually present such a disreputable appearance. (*To BROOKE*) A most unbecoming decoration for a churchman.

BROOKE. And so uncomfortable, my lord.

BISHOP. Painful, eh?

BROOKE. (*Touching his eye*) Very sore to the touch.

BISHOP. Well, don't touch it, then—don't touch it. It shall be seen to presently.

MRS. WALLER. Beefsteak's the proper thing—er—so I've been told.

WALLER. We're very sorry for the little chap, I'm sure, but more concerned about our lost property, my lord.

BISHOP. Naturally.



MRS. WALLER. Mr. Brooke assured us you've actually got our things here safe and sound. Clever, I calls it.

BISHOP. Yes—the jewels are quite safe.

WALLER. And my wallet?

BISHOP. (*Going a little toward WALLER*) Well, not knowing exactly what was in it when you lost it, of course, I can't reassure you about that. But if you'll give me just a few moments—

WALLER. (*Not understanding*) Eh?

BISHOP. Our young friends here were just about to go into the dining room with my sister, Mrs. Waller, to look at some old family portraits. (*HESTER goes down to L.I. doors and opens them. EMILY goes to the doors.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*Rising*) Family portraits? Oh, I do like them.

BISHOP. (*Going to L.C., speaking to EMILY*) Perhaps, my dear, Mrs. Waller would like a glass of wine. (*MRS. WALLER goes to EMILY.*)

EMILY. Yes—do come. (*HESTER exits L.I. DONALD joins MRS. WALLER at door. EMILY exits L.I.*)

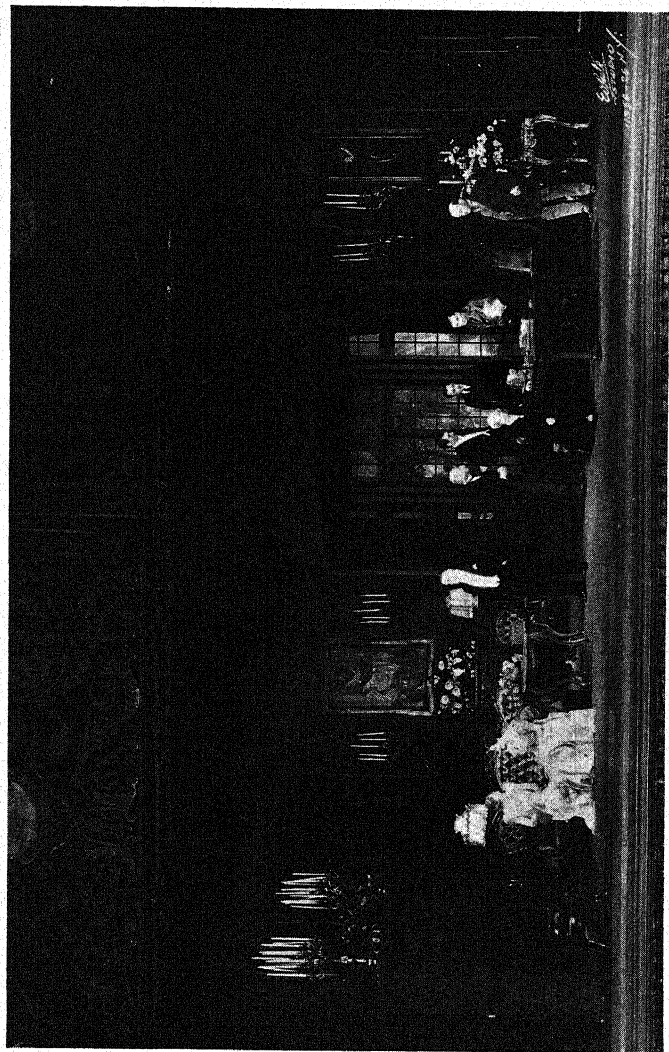
MRS. WALLER. Well, I very seldom touch anything—but as this is a special occasion. (*Turns and speaks to BISHOP*) See you subsequently, Bishop. (*She goes off L.I. DONALD follows her, closing the doors behind him. BISHOP goes to L. of table L.C.*)

WALLER. (*Has been steadily staring at DONALD. Now goes to C.*) See here, Bishop, I've recognized that young man. Are you in the habit of associating with thieves?

BISHOP. (*Hesitating—then speaking very positively*) Yes! But there's a well-established precedent for it in the Bible. (*Sits L. of table*) If you read the Bible.

WALLER. Oh!! And what's all this about my wallet? Why the secrecy, eh?

BISHOP. You'll understand in just a moment



CHARACTERS IN ACT III



BROOKE. (*Going to back of L.C. table*) If you'll excuse me, my lord, I think I—

BISHOP. Not yet, Brooke, I want you to be present here as a witness. You can put the beefsteak on your eye later.

BROOKE. Yes, my lord. (*Goes up near L.2 door.*)

WALLER. A witness? What do we want with a witness?

BISHOP. (*Picking up letter from desk, which he has previously written*) I have a little document here that I want you to sign, and I believe it is customary to have the signature of a witness as well.

WALLER. A document?

BISHOP. Well, it's in the form of a letter. I thought that would be simpler. If you'll just run your eye over it— (*Hands the letter to WALLER. MRS. WALLER is heard to laugh loudly off L. DONALD joins her in the laugh.*)

WALLER. (*Reading the letter quickly*) What the devil does this mean?

BISHOP. (*Looking up*) Dear me, I thought it quite clear. It's a letter from you to Miss Grantham, admitting your attempt to swindle her.

WALLER. (*Contemptuously*) Indeed?

BISHOP. And promising to make restitution.

WALLER. Are you trying to insult me?

BISHOP. I'm trying not to.

WALLER. Well, you've got a nerve, making a charge like that without any sort of proof to back it up. If it was anyone but you, I'd give him a punch on the nose.

BISHOP. I wouldn't advise that. Beyond that little red door there are three men—rather heavily armed.

BROOKE. (*Stepping away from the door with a start*) Oh, dear!

BISHOP. And they don't like you, Mr. Waller.

WALLER. (*Amazed*) Three men?

BISHOP. The crooks who held you up tonight and robbed you.

WALLER. Do the police know they're here?

BISHOP. No. I thought you would prefer I didn't notify the police.

WALLER. What?

BISHOP. You see, if I notify the police, it would be necessary for your pocket-case to be examined and the contents checked over.

WALLER. Well, what of it?

BISHOP. You don't want the contents of your pocket-case examined, do you, Mr. Waller?

WALLER. Why not?

BISHOP. Because of "the papers." They'd ruin you, wouldn't they, Mr. Waller?

WALLER. (*Furiously*) So you've been reading them, have you? That's why you thought you could make me sign this—by holding that threat over my head. Blackmail, eh? And you—a Bishop!

BISHOP. Let us call it whitemail. I am employing threats, I admit, but only to force you to right a wrong.

WALLER. I deny that. And you can't prove it.

BISHOP. Perhaps not—but it won't be necessary since we both know it's true—and you can't afford to have the papers in your wallet become public property.

WALLER. So—you think you've got me, don't you?

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) I know I've got you.

WALLER. All right. I'll sign. (*Sits R. of the table and takes pen.*)

BISHOP. Do! (*WALLER hesitates, thinking.*) But don't count on repudiating it later. (*WALLER looks up quickly.*) Ah—ah—you were thinking of that. I thought so, but don't think I'll let you get out of it that way, my friend. I mean to have my lawyer

take up this matter tomorrow to prevent just that contingency.

WALLER. Damn you! I've a good mind to show you up as a crook and the associate of crooks.

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) Do! If you think anyone would take your word against mine. I should relish admitting openly that I shamelessly employed force to make you behave like an honest man. Your predicament is not a happy one, my friend, but if you will defy the laws of God and man, sooner or later you must expect a reckoning.

WALLER. You're pretty smart, aren't you. (*Throws down the pen and rises*) All right, make me sign it, then! (*Turns away to c.*)

BISHOP. Well— (*Mrs. Waller enters L. I quickly, followed by Donald.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*Going to Waller at c.*) What's all this I hear, Guy?

DONALD. (*Going to Bishop. Bishop rises*) I've been telling Mrs. Waller our story and she says she was there when Hester's father gave Waller the money.

MRS. WALLER. I certainly was.

WALLER. What's that?

BISHOP. (*Smiling*) How fortunate. How extremely fortunate. (*Moves up L. a little.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*With blood in her eye but trying to restrain herself*) You're surely not trying to deny it, Guy? I don't understand such behavior. It's not gentlemanly.

WALLER. Now look here, Millie, you keep out of this.

MRS. WALLER. I'll not keep out of it. 'Eaven knows you're rich enough without trying any tricks of that sort. What kind of figure do you think we'd cut in this neighborhood if such tales got about?

DONALD. It would ruin you socially.

MRS. WALLER. Of course it would.

WALLER. Now, Millie, this is a business matter. You don't understand.

MRS. WALLER. Now listen, Guy. Don't make me talk to you in a way I might be sorry for afterward. You give Miss Grantham whatever's coming to her. Understand that?

BISHOP. He's only got to put his name to this letter. It's quite a simple matter.

MRS. WALLER. Then sign it, Guy—as the Bishop wants you to.

WALLER. I'll be damned if I do.

MRS. WALLER. Oh, foul language, eh? Now you do as I tell you—and don't make me lose my temper—you bloody little bounder.

WALLER. Millie! Millie!—Please!

MRS. WALLER. Don't talk! Sign the thing.

WALLER. (*Sulkily*) All right, if you feel that way about it. (*To table; sits; signs the paper.*)

BISHOP. (*Reaching across the table and taking the letter*) Now, Brooke, if you'll just witness this. (*BROOKE steps down to upper end of table and reaches for the pen.*)

MRS. WALLER. (*Going to R. of BROOKE at end of table*) Allow me, Bishop. I'll witness it. (*Takes pen and signs*) Right is right, I always says, and I never did 'old with hanky-panky. (*BROOKE steps back from the table. DONALD comes to L. of MRS. WALLER as she hands him the paper*) There you are, young man. And good luck to you and Miss Grantham. (*Going across to R.*) Come, Guy—we're going. (*WALLER rises and starts to follow her.*)

BISHOP. If you don't mind—there's just one other little matter—

WALLER. (*Stopping and turning*) Yes?—What's that?

BISHOP. The—er— (*Clears his throat*) —the reward, you know.

WALLER. Reward? What reward?

BISHOP. For the return of your property. A thousand pounds, you remember?

DONALD. And the Bishop has certainly earned it.

MRS. WALLER. Of course. It was he who got the jewels. Write him a check, Guy.

BISHOP. (*Taking a checkbook from the drawer*) What is your bank?

MRS. WALLER. London Midland. (*BISHOP starts filling the check.*)

WALLER. So, you want the reward, too, eh? You don't want much.

BISHOP. It's for the poor of my parish, you know.

WALLER. Oh, blast the poor of your parish.

MRS. WALLER. Guy! Your manners.

BISHOP. And the crooks. They deserve something for their night's work.

WALLER. Oh, I'm expected to pay them for robbing me, eh?

BISHOP. Yes. You see, they went to a great deal of trouble and how else are Red and Collins and Frenchy to be paid off? And there's poor Brooke, too. He deserves something besides beefsteak for that eye.

MRS. WALLER. Of course he does.

BROOKE. Thank you, my lord. (*Going toward doors L.I.*) I'll just see if there's any beefsteak in the larder. (*Exits L.I.*)

MRS. WALLER. Well, Guy, we're waiting for you to write that check.

BISHOP. It's all filled out. (*WALLER goes to table; sits and signs check.*) Their methods may have been questionable but their intentions were beyond reproach. So I intend to recompense them.

WALLER. (*Handing BISHOP the check*) That'll be just lovely.

BISHOP. (*Taking check and rising*) Thank you. I'll return the stolen property in the morning as



soon as I've seen my lawyer—and—cashed your check. (WALLER rises.)

MRS. WALLER. Oh, there's no hurry, I'm sure.

BISHOP. (*Goes to doors L. 1; opens them and calls*) Come in, my dear, the Wallers are leaving.

EMILY. (*Enters L. 1, followed by HESTER.* EMILY goes to lower end of table L. C. HESTER goes up to DONALD) Well, goodnight, Mrs. Waller. It's been such a pleasure. (DONALD shows HESTER the letter.) And you will come to lunch one day? Just a little party, you know, with some of the neighbours you haven't met.

MRS. WALLER. (*Gushing*) I shall be charmed, Lady Emily. (*Going to archway R.*) Come, Guy! (WALLER starts to arch with her.)

BISHOP. Oh—perhaps you would like a glass of wine before you go?

WALLER. (*Stopping and turning; crossly*) What do you want for it? (*Follows MRS. WALLER out R.*)

BISHOP. So—out of evil cometh good.

EMILY. (*Going to R.*) Well, is everything settled satisfactorily?

HESTER. (*Going to c.*) Yes, I think so. (DONALD joins her at c.)

BISHOP. Yes—I think everything has been arranged peacefully. (*A dull EXPLOSION is heard from the basement below.*)

EMILY. (*Startled*) Good heavens! What's that?

BISHOP. (*Laughing*) I'm afraid, my dear, they've blown up your jam cupboard. (*He rises and goes up to the L. 2 door and unlocks it.*)

EMILY. (*Indignantly*) If they've got into my preserves—

BISHOP. (*Calling downstairs*) Come up—come up, my foolish fellows. (*Goes back to his chair.*)

RED. (*Enters L. 2, followed by COLLINS and*

FRENCHY. *Their hands up*) Our 'ands is up—we'll go quietly.

BISHOP. Where is the plate? Did you have some trouble finding the vault or was there some difficulty with the keys?

RED. *(At upper end of table L.C.)* You ought to know. You invited us to see your gold plate. Where do you keep it? *(BISHOP laughs.)* You been 'avin' 'igh jinks with us, ain't you?

BISHOP. Well, now you're free to go, my friend.

RED. And empty 'anded.

BISHOP. No—if you'll promise to go straight in the future, I'll see that you're suitably recompensed.

RED. What does that mean?

BISHOP. Rewarded. But don't forget—I know you all now, and I'm going to keep an eye on you.

RED. Yes, my lord.

BISHOP. Now, let me see—dividing equally with the church—a thousand pounds—that's one—two—three—four—five ways. That's two hundred pounds apiece. *(Fills in a check)* Here, Red, is your share. You can cash this at the bank tomorrow—if Waller's check is good.

RED. *(Takes check and examines it)* Two 'undred quid—not too bad. Thank you, my lord. *(Starts to go up to the windows.)*

BISHOP. *(Stopping him)* Oh—just a moment—*(Hands RED a small photograph from his table)* Is this your photograph?

RED. *(Looks at the photo)* No, my lord—that ain't me. *(Hands the photo back to the BISHOP.)*

BISHOP. No—but it's your fingerprints—and beautifully clear ones, too. The jam, no doubt.

RED. *(Dazed)* Bli' me!

BISHOP. *(Putting the photo in drawer of table)* I'm adding them to my collection, so you had better behave yourself.

RED. Don't you worry about me, my lord, I will!  
(Starts up again.)

BISHOP. Oh—before you go—would you mind leaving Grandmother O'Malley's brooch?

RED. (Surprised—reaches into his pocket and takes out a gold brooch) Oh— Can't I 'ave that for a keepsake?

BISHOP. (Reprovingly—shaking his finger at RED) Ah—ah—

RED. (With a silly laugh, lays the brooch on the table) You certainly are 'ot. (Goes up and exits L.C. windows.)

BISHOP. (Writing another check) And now, Collins, here is a check for your share.

COLLINS. (Stepping to head of table) If you please, my lord, I don't want anything.

BISHOP. (Startled) No?

COLLINS. I've seen the light, my lord, thanks to you. And from now on, I'm going straight, so help me. And I don't want no money as ain't earned honest.

BISHOP. Do you mean that, my boy?

EMILY. (Going to chair R. of table L.C. and sitting) Do you mean you've reformed?

COLLINS. Yes, my lady. (To BISHOP) I want you to hang on to my share and add it to your fund for the poor of the parish.

BISHOP. Well, if you really mean it, my boy—  
(Extends his hand to COLLINS.)

FRENCHY. (Steps to below BISHOP's chair) That goes for me too, Bishop.

BISHOP. Oh! (Overjoyed. Quickly seizes FRENCHY's hand.)

FRENCHY. After coming to know you, Bishop, I'm a new man.

BISHOP. (To EMILY) Complete regeneration. Merely the force of a good example.

HESTER. (*Stepping down c.*) Now, just a minute, you chaps—you can't get away with that.

DONALD. (*Stepping down with HESTER*) I'm sorry to shatter any illusions, Bishop, but these men aren't in earnest.

BISHOP. Eh?

HESTER. They were simply—er—pulling your leg.

BISHOP. (*In a daze*) What?

DONALD. You see, they aren't crooks at all. They're just friends of ours, helping us out.

BISHOP. (*Completely deflated*) Oh—I see—well, all I can say is—as crooks they were—er—suspiciously convincing.

FRENCHY. (*Laughing*) Thank you, Bishop. If we fooled you, we must have been good.

COLLINS. As a matter of fact, Bishop, driving for Waller wasn't exactly a joy ride.

BISHOP. I daresay not. (*COLLINS and FRENCHY go across R. near the arch. BISHOP rises and goes to above the table.*)

DONALD. (*Going to BISHOP and shaking hands with him*) I can't tell you how grateful we are to you, for everything.

BISHOP. My sister and I are very grateful to you—for a most delightful evening.

DONALD. (*Stepping down to R. of EMILY, who is still seated R. of the table*) And I'm going to kiss you. (*Bends down and kisses her.*)

EMILY. (*Thrilled. Rises*) Oh! I've never been kissed by a crook before. And I like it! (*DONALD laughs and goes up c.*)

HESTER. (*Going to EMILY*) Goodnight, Lady Emily. (*Kisses her.*)

BISHOP. (*Going to DONALD up c.*) My boy—you've made my sister very happy. (*DONALD laughs and goes toward arch R.*)

HESTER. (*Going to BISHOP*) You know every-

thing, Bishop—so you know how I feel. (*She kisses the BISHOP on the cheek. He laughs embarrassedly*) And I'm coming to church one Sunday to hear you preach. (*Joins DONALD at the arch.*)

BISHOP. (*Going up R.C.*) Do—do come, all of you. And—could you bring Red? (*HESTER, DONALD, COLLINS and FRENCHY laugh and exit R.*)

BROOKE. (*Coming in L.I., holding a large piece of beefsteak over his black eye*) I found some beefsteak, my lord. (*Goes above the table to up C.*)

BISHOP. (*Up R.C.*) Yes—I see you did.

EMILY. (*Shocked*) Tomorrow's lunch!

BROOKE. Oh—I'm sorry! (*Holding out the piece of steak to EMILY*) Shall I put it back?

BISHOP. (*Quickly*) No—no—my dear chap. Desperate ills require desperate remedies. You do look a little shaken.

BROOKE. (*Sadly*) I feel positively shattered, my lord. May I go to bed?

BISHOP. (*Patting him on the back*) Yes, go to bed—go to bed, my poor chap. (*BROOKE goes past him to R. BISHOP starts to the table L.C. Calls to BROOKE*) And—pleasant dreams.

BROOKE. (*Stopping on the stair platform and turning*) I beg your pardon? (*WARN Curtain.*)

BISHOP. (*In a louder tone*) I say—pleasant dreams!

BROOKE. Thank you, my lord—but I'm afraid that's hardly likely. (*He goes slowly and painfully upstairs, holding the steak to his eye.*)

BISHOP. (*Calling after him, kindly*) Goodnight—goodnight.

EMILY. (*Going across to the stairs and looking up after BROOKE*) Poor Mr. Brooke. You know, James, he never looked so interesting to me before. (*She turns back to the lamp on the table back of the sofa R. and extinguishes it. Then she gets two small*

*brass candlesticks from the table and turns to BISHOP, who joins her back of the end table R.C.)*

BISHOP. Yes. He's growing up. (*Looks at his watch*) Well, I suppose there's nothing left to do but go to bed. (*Strikes a match and lights the two candles.*)

EMILY. I'm sorry it's all over, James. It was beautiful while it lasted, wasn't it?

BISHOP. Very interesting—very! (*He takes the candles from EMILY—leans over and kisses her on the cheek, then picks up the cigar humidor containing the "swag" and they BOTH start for the stairs*) And to think—it all came out of our going into that pub to telephone.

EMILY. (*As they reach the stairway platform*) Yes—we must make a practice of going into pubs hereafter, James. (*The BISHOP turns off the remaining LIGHTS at the switch near the arch, which leaves only the hall light burning and they go slowly up the stairs as—*)

THE CURTAIN FALLS

## THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES

### PUBLICITY THROUGH YOUR LOCAL PAPERS

The press can be an immense help in giving publicity to your productions. In the belief that the best reviews from the New York and other large papers are always interesting to local audiences, and in order to assist you, we are printing below several excerpts from those reviews.

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"The Bishop is the top."—*Bronx Home News*.

"This is one comedy which we can offer the public, young and old, without reservations."—*The Catholic World*.

"Whimsical as Barrie—bubbling with humor."—*Pittsburgh Sun-Telegraph*.

"—unfolds for the theatergoers a number of pleasantries—its principal character is a man with fine comic possibilities."—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

"—a happy solution to the parents' problem of what to take the boys and girls to that would excite

without besmirching."—*Robert Benchley in "The New Yorker."*

"—good fun—just what it is set out to be—a good evening's entertainment."—*New York News.*

"—proves a refreshing change from the stronger current diet."—*Newark Star-Eagle.*

"—the audience is hilarious because the Bishop has a good time."—*Denver News.*

"—audience last night laughed heartily."—*Pittsburgh Post-Gazette.*

"—valleys of applause. —should make any man of the cloth rejoice that one of his calling could prove so resourceful and courageous in behalf of justice and romance."—*Pittsburgh Press.*

"Cheerful and amiably humorous."—*New York Times.*

"He blessed everybody last night, including the audience in a comedy that deserves to be written."—*New York Herald-Tribune.*

"—rich in its possibilities—ingratiating enough to call for thanks—"—*New York Evening Post.*

"—you could have a pleasant evening with the sleuthing Bishop."—*New York Telegraph.*



THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES  
FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOTS

ACT I

Ground cloth.

Small black sofa. Against lower right wall.

Square table. In front of sofa.

Chair. Left of this table.

Chair. Above this table.

Ashtray with matches. On this table.

Portrait of Queen Victoria. Above mantel.

Clock on mantel. Set for 9.

5 Pewter steins. Spaced on mantel.

Large wood and pewter mug. On L. end of mantel.

(For jewels).

Visiting card. In large mug.

Beer and whiskey signs. On mantel.

Pictures of old-time fighters. On walls of room.

Chair. At left side of mantel.

Row of wooden pegs. On jog back of door L.C.

Fire poker. At left side of fireplace.

Bar. Up and down stage at left.

Row of three shelves. Back of bar.

Shelves filled with assorted liquor stock.

Bottles. In shelves over door back of bar.

Square table. In front of bar.

Chair. Above this table.

Chair. Left of this table.

Ashtray. On this table. (With matches).

## FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOTS III

- Hank of clothesline. On this table.  
2 Three-foot lengths of clothesline. On this table.  
Large folding jack-knife. On this table.  
Large brown silk handkerchief. (For RED). On this table.  
Telephone. On shelf under bar. (Upstage end).  
2 Lemons. On shelf under bar. (Downstage end).  
Large butcher knife. On shelf under bar. (Downstage end).  
Knife sharpener. On shelf under bar. (Down stage end).  
3 High-ball glasses. On shelf under bar.  
3 Whiskey glasses. On shelf under bar.  
Bottle of gin. On shelf back of bar.  
Bottle of Scotch. On shelf back of bar.  
Bottle of tonic. On shelf back of bar.  
Bottle opener. On shelf back of bar.  
Ashtray. With matches. On upstage end of bar.  
2 Bar towels. On bar.  
2 Cigar boxes. On bar.  
2 Cigarette cartons. On bar.  
Beer and whiskey glasses. On shelf back of bar.

## OFF-STAGE PROPS

### *Off L. for BISHOP.*

- Silver snuff-box. Snuff in box. (Cinnamon).  
Magnifying glass.  
Watch and chain.  
Nose glasses. On black ribbon.  
Small flashlight.  
Three-foot board with nails in it.  
Small black shawl.  
Small bunch of keys.

### *Off L. for HESTER.*

- Small revolver. (Not practical).  
Light raincoat.

## 112 FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOTS

- Off* L. *for* LADY EMILY.  
Lady's umbrella. Wet.  
Lorgnette.
- Off* L. *for* MRS. WALLER.  
Diamond necklace.  
4 Diamond bracelets.
- Off* L. *for* MR. WALLER.  
Umbrella. Wet.  
Black leather wallet.  
Watch.  
2 Diamond rings.
- Off* L. *for* DONALD.  
Revolver. (Practical).  
Black silk mask.
- Off* L. *for* COLLINS.  
Prop money. £1 notes.
- Off* L. *behind up* L. door.  
Round bar tray on which are:  
Bottle of Champagne. (Unopened).  
2 Champagne glasses.  
Brass tray on which are:  
Pot of tea.  
Jug of hot water.  
3 Cups and saucers.  
3 Spoons.  
Sugar bowl.  
Saucer of sliced lemon.
- Off* R.C. *back of* mantel.  
Clock strike.

## ACT II

- Full stage rug.  
Large Gothic fireplace. Lower R.  
Fireplace equipment.  
2 Large brass candelabra. 13 candles each. On  
mantel.

## FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOTS 113

- Large brass bowl of ivy and myrtle. On mantel.
- Large Victorian sofa. At fireplace. Facing front.
- Armchair to match sofa. Below fireplace.
- Oval table. Left end of sofa.
- Bowl of flowers on this table.
- Large humidor of cigars. On this table.
- Large ashtray. On this table.
- Box of safety matches. On this table.
- Small framed picture. On this table.
- Narrow table. Back of sofa.
- 2 Small brass candlesticks (with candles). On this table.
- Ashtray. On this table.
- Box of safety matches. On this table.
- Red upholstered Gothic bench. In hallway backing.
- 2 Large tapestries. On walls of hallway backing.
- Gothic cabinet. Against back wall R.
- Telephone. In Gothic cabinet.
- Phone book. On top of cabinet.
- Large silver bowl of flowers. On cabinet.
- Religious paintings. Above mantel.
- Large portrait of BISHOP's ancestor. Above cabinet.
- Brass sconces. 5 candles each. Either side of picture.
- Large armchair. Left of cabinet against back wall.
- Cardinal red draperies. (On traveler). At French windows.
- Cardinal red draperies. At arch R.
- Large library table. L.C.
- On large table:
  - Desk blotter.
  - Gold desk set.
  - Small sewing basket.
  - Deck of playing cards.
  - Several opened letters. (Upstage end).
  - Leather appointment book.
  - Writing paper.

## 114 FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOTS

- Fountain pen.
- Check book. (In drawer of table).
- Small photo. (In drawer of table).
- Large Gothic chair. L. of table L. (BISHOP'S *chair*).
- Small chair. (Above table).
- Single chair. Below dining room doors down L.
- Gold console table. Above dining room doors.
- Large silver pitcher of flowers. On this table.
- Break-away picture. Above this table.
- Large portrait of BISHOP'S ancestor. Above this table.
- Religious painting. Above red door up L.
- Brass sconces. 3 Candles each. Either side of picture.
- Large brass key. In lock of red door.

## OFF-STAGE PROPS

- Off L. near dining room doors.*
  - Large silver tray on which are:
    - Silver bowl of salad.
    - Platter of cold cuts.
    - Silver coffee pot.
    - 2 Demi-tasse cups.
    - Silver sugar bowl.
    - Silver salt and pepper shakers.
    - 2 Spoons. 2 Knives. 2 Forks.
    - Silver salad fork and spoon.
    - Decanter of wine.
    - 2 Wine glasses.
    - Plate of sliced bread.
    - 2 Napkins.
- Off R. on stair platform.*
  - Antique jewel case. Filled with jewelry.
- Off R.*
  - Effect for muffled explosion.

FURNITURE AND PROPERTY PLOTS 115

Off L.

Trap to break glass of picture on shot cue.

ACT III

*Same as Act II. Except:*

Strike tray from table L.

Strike sewing basket from table L.

Put playing cards on table.

Put photo on table.

Ready checkbook in drawer of table.

Ready off L.

Large slice of raw beefsteak.

Large brooch. For RED.

Effect for muffled explosion.

glasses ✓  
match ✓

knifing glass ✓

hammer ✓

checkbook ✓

playing cards ✓

sewing basket ✓

tray ✓

beefsteak ✓

brooch ✓

trap box ✓

flask ✓

# THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES

## ELECTRICAL PLOT

### ACT I

TIME: 9 P.M. *A rainy night.*

*In 1st Boarder:*

- 400 W Spot. On couch R.
- 400 W Spot. On table R.
- 400 W Spot. On mantel.
- 400 W Spot. On door L.C.
- 400 W Spot. On bar. Upper end.
- 400 W Spot. On bar. Lower end.
- 400 W Spot. On table L.
- 400 W Spot. On chair L. of table L.
- 400 W Spot. L.C. Flooded. General Lighting.
- 400 W Spot. R.C. Flooded. General Lighting.

*Foots:*

- 1 Circuit Amber.  $\frac{1}{2}$  up.
- 1 Circuit Pink.  $\frac{1}{2}$  up.

*Fixtures:*

- 2 Lamp hanging gas fixtures. Over bar.
- 1 Lamp gas fixture. Over couch R. Wall.
- Coal fire glow. In grate.

*Off-Stage Lighting:*

- 3 Lamp amber strip in backing door R.
- Rain pipe. Back of door L.C.
- 2 1000 W rain spots. Off L.

## ELECTRICAL PLOT

117

Motor effect. Off c.

Tire puncture effect. Off c. (Air tank).

### *Cues:*

Rain on at rise.

Rain off at cue.

3 Motor cues.

1 Tire puncture cue.

## ELECTRICAL PLOT

### ACT II

TIME: *Evening. A few minutes after Act I.*

### *In 1st Boarder:*

400 W Spot. On couch R.

400 W Spot. On couch R.

400 W Spot. On cabinet up R.

400 W Spot. On stairway arch.

400 W Spot. On table R.

400 W Spot. R.C. Flooded. General.

400 W Spot. L.C. Flooded. General.

400 W Spot. On table L. Lower end.

400 W Spot. On table L. Upper end.

400 W Spot. On Red door up L.

400 W Spot. On chair L. of table L.

400 W Spot. Up c. General.

### *Foots:*

1 Circuit amber.  $\frac{1}{2}$  up.

1 Circuit pink.  $\frac{1}{2}$  up.

### *Fixtures:*

Table lamp. On table back of sofa R.

Floor lamp. Up R.C.

Switch. On wall near archway R.

Log fire. In fireplace.

### *Off-Stage:*

1000 W olivette. Overhead stairway.



## ELECTRICAL PLOT

- 4 Light amber strip. In backing down L.
- 2 Light blue strip. In red door backing up L.

*Rain:*

Rain pipe. Same as Act I. Back of French windows.

On at cue.

Off at cue.

*Light cues:*

Blackout. (Except fire and blue strip). On cue.

Full up. On cue.

## ACT III

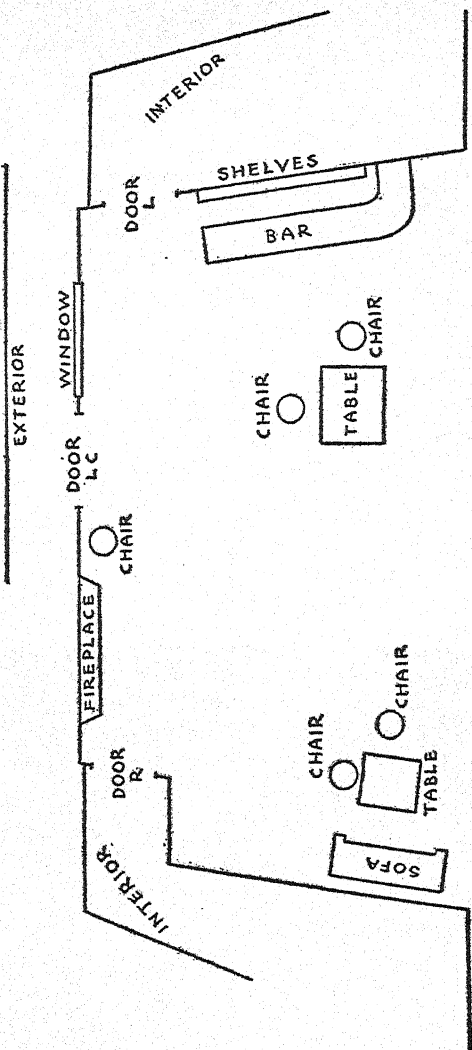
*Same as Act II. Except:*

Foots full up.

Ready motor effect. On and off at cue.

Lights  $\frac{1}{4}$  down. On cue.

Lights out. On cue. Except fire and hallway flood.



SCENE DESIGN

ACT I

THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES

EXTERIOR

FRENCH  
WINDOWS

CABINET

CHAIR  
LAMP

ARCH

INTERIOR  
STAIRS

INTERIOR

DOOR  
L2

TABLE

SOFA

TABLE  
RC

CHAIR

CHAIR

TABLE  
LC

TABLE

CHAIR

CHAIR

FIREPLACE

SCENE DESIGN  
ACTS 2 & 3

THE BISHOP MISBEHAVES

## THE GHOST TRAIN

A mystery thriller in 3 acts. By Arnold Ridley. Produced originally at the Eltinge Theatre, New York. 7 males, 4 females. 1 interior scene. Modern costumes.

The story is laid in a peaceful village in Maine where there lives a superstition of twenty years standing about a ghost train which flashes by in the dead of night, swinging the scythe of death. Rum-runners use this superstition to their own advantage in the transportation of liquor from Canada. As the night train draws into the small station, some passengers get off and the train moves on. These passengers are compelled to wait all night, for they have missed connections. And what a night they spend. When the decrepit old station-master tells them about the terrifying "Ghost Train," bringing death to all who observe it, they just poo-poo the idea. But everything happens as forecast. The station-master is stricken dead mysteriously. The signal bell rings. The engine whistles. The train roars through the junction and one who rashly gazes upon it apparently succumbs. Lovers of mystery plays will find here a piece to their liking.

"If you want a hair-raising, seat-gripping ride, buy your tickets early for 'The Ghost Train.'" New York Mirror.

(Royalty, fifty dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## THE SPIDER

A mystery play in 3 acts. By Fulton Oursler and Lowell Brentano. Produced originally at Channin's Forty-Sixth Street Theatre in New York. 21 males, 3 females. 5 interior scenes. Modern costumes.

Here is a novelty, if there ever was one, replete with chills and fevers. The authors have represented the dastardly murder of Carrington, not on the stage, but in the audience. While Alexander, assistant to Chatrand the Great, is reading the initials on your watch the lights go out, a shot is fired and when the lights go up again Carrington is discovered mortally wounded on a runway over the orchestra pit and immediately the theatre is loud with excitement. Who fired the shot? As the play goes on through the succeeding scenes, bringing doctors and policemen up the aisles, bidding the audience to remain seated, and posting officers at every exit to prevent escape, suspicion rests on the magician, the girl and others. Shots bark here and there. House lights go on and off. Ghostly objects swing across the darkness; strange faces and eerie voices. And all in good time the slippery scoundrel is discovered.

(Royalty, thirty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## THE RALE MCCOY

A mystery comedy in 3 acts. By M. J. J. MacKeown.  
4 males, 3 females. 1 interior scene. Modern costumes.

The story of the play is that of Robbie John McCoy, a gentleman of apparently no fixed occupation, who is married to Rose Ann McCoy, a woman of property and of very fixed ideas as to handling a husband. He returns to his home after an absence of three days and has only dim ideas as to all he had done during the time, but he does recall that he had, with great difficulty, arranged a match between Billy McCandless and Maggie Robinson. This tale and an unusual theory advanced by a stranger, concerning death and ghosts, fails to interest, much less mollify, Mrs. McCoy, who wants a better explanation of her spouse's protracted absence. Left alone Robbie John dozes in his chair and turns around after a moment to find that a stranger has arrived. She is garbed in the dress of the ancient Egyptians. The strange thing about the story, so far, is that Robbie John is not asleep. He is not dreaming and the visitor is real flesh and blood. What actually happened is too good to unfold here, but suffice it to say that the rapidly occurring situations, led up to by sparkling lines, hold your interest from start to finish.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## THE WASP'S NEST

Mystery comedy in 3 acts. By Adelaide Matthews and  
Martha Wiley. Produced originally at Wallack's Theatre,  
New York. 7 males, 5 females. 1 interior. Modern costumes.

Roger McWell comes to the deserted home of his dead grandfather to meet a prospective buyer. At the same time a train of bandits, led by a young attractive girl, who has escaped from a prison, seek the original documents and bonds on which he has been holding the property. The presence of these various persons, in addition to a young attractive girl, who has escaped from a prison, makes for an extremely funny situation, since each group believed themselves to be alone in the place. There are mysterious disappearances, knockings, groans, and rushing sounds, ringing bells, apparitions, everything that a first class mystery play should have.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL

A play in 3 acts. By Channing Pollock. Produced originally at the Apollo Theatre, New York. 7 males, 5 females. 1 interior scene. Modern costumes. Plays a full evening.

Jennifer, the heroine of this play about everyday people, saw her husband as a knight in shining armor. When she helped him on with his coat in the morning, and sent him off to work, the coat—to her—was a coat of mail, and the whistle of the 8.20 was a trumpet-call, summoning him to battle.

The scene is laid in the New Jersey suburbs where Archie and Jennifer buy a house—the house beautiful. For the next thirty years their lives and the fortunes of a local real estate development are closely interwoven. Archie is elected mayor of the town and, with the aid of his son, wins out in an encounter with the real estate developers who try to turn the suburb into a cheap, get-rich-quick development. Victory, however, is bitter because Archie is discharged by his employer for his successful efforts in defeating the project. The elder Davis dies but his son carries on, and Jennifer keeps alive their ideals, with Archie's spirit lingering to afford her courage and companionship.

(Royalty, fifty dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS (also published in cloth at \$2.00).

## THE FOOL

Play in 4 acts. By Channing Pollock. Produced originally by Selwyn & Co., at the Times Square Theatre, New York. 13 males, 8 females (and extras). 2 interiors. Modern costumes.

Channing Pollock's "The Fool" made theatrical history. Presented simultaneously by six companies in America, and two in England; enthusiastically endorsed by schools and churches, it has been read or witnessed by nearly a hundred million people, all over the world. It deals with a young clergyman who resolves to try "What would happen now-a-days to a man who lived like Christ?" Through a series of intensely dramatic incidents, he learns that such a man might lose the world, but would find happiness. The incident of the healing of the little crippled girl, Mary Margaret, through faith, drew tears from many thousands of experienced theatre-goers. The play is not only a remarkable preachment, but an exceptionally dramatic and gripping drama of present day life. It is not difficult to act or produce, and, because of its essential power, it can scarcely fail of its effect upon any audience.

(Royalty on application.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## I LOVE AN ACTRESS

A comedy in 4 acts. By Laszlo Fodor, adapted by Ches-ter Erskin. Produced originally at the Times Square Theatre, New York. 12 males, 6 females (and extras). 4 interior scenes. Modern costumes.

It seems to be the fate of most young men at one time, at least, in their lives to fall in love with an actress. In most cases this worship is carried on from afar and eventually takes its place as a pleasing memory of adolescence. But with George, our hero, it turned out to be quite different. He was a poor boy who idolized Eva Sandor, the most brilliant actress in Buda-Pesth. He followed her on the street, into the large department store where he proceeded to bankrupt himself making unnecessary purchases in order that he might be near her and, if possible, win her smile. Winning a fair lady's smile is often a sure way to open up many complications, and George's principal trouble comes in the person of Willie Strauss, the multi-millionaire. In fact Strauss, who owns nearly half of the country, wants to make Eva his wife in order that all the brilliant success of Buda-Pesth may be his. Poor George is certainly working against great odds, and to make matters worse Eva ignores him. Every step seems to end in failure even to the extent of being ceremoniously put out of her home. But persistence is not so easily quenched. Before the play is over this lad from nowhere becomes the rival of the most celebrated banker in the country. All the common sense is with the banker. All the romance is with the boy. At the train gate in the terminal, romance at last gets the upper hand.

"Here is the best play of the new season . . . a charming thing."  
Arthur Pollock, Brooklyn Daily Eagle.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## THE BUTTER-AND-EGG MAN

Comedy in 3 acts. By George S. Kaufman. 8 males, 5 females. 3 interiors. Modern costumes.

"The Butter-and-Egg Man" is one of the most popular of Broadway successes. A delightful satirical comedy about a seemingly simple country boy who came to New York and broke into the play producing game. But the young "butter-and-egg man" is somewhat more astute than he looks, and in the end is instrumental in turning a "flop" into what is known in the game as a "wow." The plot rises to the heights of satirical comedy in the second act, where the production is discussed by the cast and backers. The play starts out with a tremendous stride and continues right up to the fall of the last curtain. A sparkling comedy.

(Royalty, fifty dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## MIS' NELLY OF N' ORLEANS

Comedy in 3 acts. By Laurence Eyre. Produced originally by Cohan & Harris at the Henry Miller Theatre, New York. 4 males, 5 females, also masquers, singers, etc. 1 exterior. Modern costumes.

Miss Nelly, who had been a dashing creole belle in 1886, returns to her old garden in St. Charles Street, New Orleans, after an absence of thirty-four years, apparently willing to accept the defeat of old age, but really as young in spirits as ever and eager for a new adventure. She finds material ready for her wit and taste for romantic intrigue. The son of the man who had jilted her is in love with her niece, and the father himself, still chewing on the cud of rage against Miss Nelly whom he had thought unworthy of his love, is plotting with craft to break off the match. Miss Nelly works fantastically to score a feminine victory over the one-time lover who had given her the destiny of an old maid. She stages a moonlight dinner party in her garden and rejuvenates herself as the girl who once had all New Orleans at her feet. She re-creates the atmosphere of the romantic past, and bewitches everyone. The old mystery of her broken engagement is cleared up, but the problem of patching up the broken engagement of the present takes a new turn when the youth who figures in it is carried away by Creole chivalry and proclaims that he has transferred his love to Miss Nelly.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## YOU AND I

Comedy in 3 acts. By Philip Barry. 4 males, 3 females. 2 interiors. Modern costumes.

Maitland White is not content, because his ambition is to be a painter. His heart is set upon his boy becoming a great architect, but Roderick falls in love with Veronica, and announces his intention of marrying her, and seeking a job. The father is grieved, and his wife induces him to retire and forget his troubles in the pursuit of art. He does so and produces a picture. But investments fail, and he is threatened with ruin. Veronica breaks her engagement with Roderick in order that he may study just when there is no money to pay for it. At this juncture Mrs. White and a friend arrange a ball, at which the picture shall be sold at auction. She invites connoisseurs and announces that \$4,000 has been bid. Maitland is delighted, until he discovers that the purchaser is his old "boss," who wants the picture for advertising, but his pride is overcome by a realization of his own limitations, and he sacrifices to parental duty. An especially attractive play for high schools, colleges, and little theatres.

(Royalty, fifty dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.



## THE WARRIOR'S HUSBAND

A comedy in 3 acts. By Julian Thompson. Produced originally at the Morosco Theatre, New York. 8 males, 13 females. 1 interior, 2 exterior scenes. Greek costumes.

This ruddy lark begins in Hippolyta's pretty palace in the land of the Amazons where men are on the distaff side, and where soldiering women merely console themselves with men after the excitement of battle. The Greeks are at the gates and the ladies gird themselves for battle, but it is discovered that the war-chest is empty. To replenish it Hippolyta agrees to marry Sapiens, whose mother promises her a large dowry. Here follows a hilarious ceremony in which Sapiens displays all the tremors of a blushing bride. This over with, the Queen dons her armor and prepares for conflict, while her husband shrinks into the background to become a "war-groom." Here tragedy injects itself when the Queen's gusty sister is carried away by Theseus the Greek, taking with him Hippolyta's girdle, the garment that symbolizes feminine superiority. The loss of the girdle very nearly results in turning men into the dominant sex. When, however, Theseus gallantly returns the girdle to Hippolyta, she quickly gets her forces under discipline again, and her flighty little husband, who had strayed during the excitement, submits to domestic authority again.

(Royalty on application.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## MERTON OF THE MOVIES

Comedy in 4 acts. By Geo. S. Kaufman and Marc Connelly. Produced originally at the Cort Theatre, New York. 7 males, 4 females. 5 scenes, but each may be simply arranged with very little trouble. Modern costumes.

This is the tale of a young clerk in a small town general store, who, like many an American boy, bitten by the movie "bug" and itching to do "something bigger and finer" on the screen, arrives on a Hollywood lot. How Merton "struggled and sacrificed" to become a movie actor is very funny, of course, and the fun side of it never lost sight of for a single moment. But beneath it all, one can see how the boy is suffering, and sometimes the very pathos and humanness of the situations into which he is thrust, only make the rip-roaring comedy all the more laughable and appreciable to the audience. Merton almost reaches the point of starvation before a friendly actress pushes him into success—a success far different from his dreams.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## THE CHARM SCHOOL

Comedy in 3 acts. By Alice Duer Miller and Robert Milton. Produced originally at the Bijou Theatre in New York. 6 males, 10 females. (May be played by 5 males and 3 females). Any number of school girls may be used in the ensembles. 2 interior scenes. Modern costumes.

The story of "The Charm School" is familiar to Mrs. Miller's readers. It relates the adventures of a handsome young automobile salesman scarcely out of his teens who, upon inheriting a girls' boarding school from a maiden aunt, insists on running it himself, according to his own ideas, chief of which is, by the way, that the dominant feature in the education of the young girl of today should be CHARM.

The situations that arise are teeming with humor—clean, wholesome humor. In the end the young man gives up the school and promises to wait until the most precocious of his pupils reaches a marriageable age. The freshness of youth, the charm of originality, and the wholesome pleasant entertainment embodied in this play make it one of the most popular on our list. We strongly recommend it for high school production.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## CLARENCE

A comedy in 4 acts. By Booth Tarkington. 5 males, 5 females. 2 interior scenes. Modern costumes.

Clarence has no medals, no shoulder bars, no great accomplishment. One of the "five million," he served where he was sent—though it was no further than Texas. As an entomologist he found—on this side of the ocean—no field for his specialty in the great war. So they set him to driving mules.

Now, reduced to civil life and seeking a job, he finds a position in the home of one Wheeler, a wealthy Englewood man with a family. And because he'd "been in the army" he becomes guide, philosopher and friend to the members of the same agitated and distracted family group. Clarence's position is an anomalous one. He mends the bathroom plumbing, he tunes the piano, he types—off stage—he plays the saxophone. And around him revolves such a group of characters as only Booth Tarkington could offer. It is a real American comedy; and the audience ripples with appreciative and delighted laughter.

"It is as American as 'Huckleberry Finn' or pumpkin pie." N. Y. Times.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

This

the dat.

la **COME OUT OF THE KITCHEN** as wi

A charming comedy in 3 acts. Adapted by A. E. Thomas from the story of the same name by Alice Duer Miller. Produced originally by Henry Miller at the Cohan Theatre, New York. 6 males, 5 females. 3 interior scenes. Modern costumes.

The story is written around a Virginia family of the old aristocracy, who, finding themselves temporarily embarrassed, decide to rent their home to a rich Yankee. The lease stipulated that a competent staff of white servants should be engaged, and one of the daughters of the family conceives the mad-cap idea that she, her sister and their two brothers shall act as the domestic staff. Olivia who is the ring-leader in the merry scheme, elects to preside over the destinies of the kitchen. When Burton Crane arrives from the North, accompanied by Mrs. Falkener, her daughter and Crane's attorney, Tucker, they find the staff of servants to possess so many methods of behavior out of the ordinary that amusing complications begin to arise immediately. Olivia's charm and beauty impress Crane above everything else and the merry story continues through a maze of delightful incidents until the real identity of the heroine is finally disclosed, but not until Crane has professed his love for his charming cook, and the play ends with the brightest prospects of happiness for these two young people.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

## JONESY

Comedy in 3 acts. By Anne Morrison and John Peter Toohey. Produced originally by Earl Boothe at the Bijou Theatre, New York. 8 males, 5 females. 1 interior. Modern costumes.

The "Jonesy" of the title is Wilbur Jones, who comes home from college bringing a fraternity brother with him. Engaged to the girl next door, his vagrant fancy is attracted by the ingénue of the local stock company. His father and mother assume that he is trying to elope with the actress, and try to save him. Before they discover that the girl is the niece of their most influential townsman, the man from whom senior Jones hopes to get a good job, they have let themselves in for many embarrassing complications. With this matter reasonably adjusted, they make the further discovery that their son has sold the family car to pay his poker debts and when the father attempts to recover the car he gets himself arrested. Many humorous complications arise that unravel themselves into a happy ending.

(Royalty, twenty-five dollars.) PRICE 75 CENTS.

THE DRAMATISTS  
Washington Conn

# FRENCH'S

## Standard Library Edition

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